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**GUILT;**  
  
OR,  
  
**THE ANNIVERSARY:**  
  
**A TRAGEDY,**  
  
**IN FOUR ACTS.**

FROM THE GERMAN OF ADOLPHUS MÜLLNER.

*Ed. by R. P. Ellies*

---

*"Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus  
Interpres."*

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**EDINBURGH:**  
  
**PRINTED BY JAMES BALLANTYNE AND CO.**

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1819.

*1<sup>st</sup> ed.*



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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To produce a rapid sketch in *blank verse* from the Octo-syllabic *rhyme* of MÜLLNER, *which, with proper alterations, might afterwards be adapted to the English stage*, was the Translator's intention in the following sheets. Had his object been to do justice to "DIE SCHULD," as a POEM, his procedure would of course have been very different. There are several inaccuracies of versification and expression, which fall to be corrected if the work should ever be regularly published; the present impression being limited to fifty copies.



## STANZAS INTRODUCTORY.

---

*"Erzeugniss eines trüben Herbst-monath."* — MÜLLNER.

---

THE sun looks forth again—the skies are mild,  
And something of a balmy west wind blows ;—  
The varied colouring of the forest wild,  
Once more begins its beauty to disclose.  
Then, at my window, cheerfully again,  
The redbreast wakes his contemplative strain.

### II.

Sweet bird ! thou comest to tell me of past days,  
When first in Gothic tales I took delight,  
And thought, perchance, to frame immortal lays,  
Though dreams like these long since were put to flight.  
Enough, if other authors I can read,—  
And in translation's humble task succeed.

## III.

Most pleasant is it, MÜLLNER! to recline  
 In some deep vale, beneath autumnal skies,  
 And meditate mysterious lore like thine,  
 And listen to the south wind's pensive sighs,  
 While Nature's fading beauties all around,  
 Give to each page an interest more profound.

## IV.

For sadness—and even pain itself—so long  
 As they are cherish'd, and come not unsought,  
 Have their own charms, and for poetic song  
 Unfold a treasury of lofty thought;  
 Though sometimes may the gifted Bard at last,  
 Even at his own creations stand aghast.

## V.

*Now for plain prose.*—'Twas on a lovely day,  
 When first I read "DIE SCHULD;" and rashly then  
 Resolv'd the volume not aside to lay,  
 Till I had proved its worth to Englishmen.—  
 But had I known of CAPTAIN FRYE's new version,\*  
 It would have damp'd my spirit of exertion.

---

\* Advertised in the "Times" newspaper, but not yet published.

## STANZAS INTRODUCTORY.

v

### VI.

And, all at once, how did the smiling skies  
Their influence change! Relentless winds arose,  
And swept away the forests' varied dies,  
And hurried the sweet season to a close ;—  
Then like the wither'd leaves, poetic flowers  
Lay numb'd with frost in our cold northern bowers.

### VII.

And therefore, in such weak exhausted mood,  
Feebly thy likeness, MÜLLNER, have I traced ;—  
Yet may the *Silhouette*, itself so rude,  
Ere long by glowing colours be replaced,  
If SOTHEY or COLERIDGE should awake  
A portrait full of life and truth to make.

### VIII.

But while the storm, without, raged loud and chill,  
Bright eyes were gleaming on me, and sweet voices  
Strove with encouragement my heart to fill.  
(In praise even a translator's heart rejoices,)  
And though even with such aid the work may fall,  
Yet without this, it had not lived at all.

\*\*\*\*\* , NEAR EDINBURGH,  
Nov. 2, 1819.





THE  
**ANNIVERSARY:**  
A TRAGEDY.

▲

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HUGO, *Count of Oerindur.*

ELVIRA, *his Countess.*

BERTHA, *the sister of Oerindur—unmarried.*

DON VALEROS, *Grandee of Spain, a Knight of the Golden Fleece.*

OTTO, *Elvira's son by a former marriage, the grandson of Valeros.*

KOLBERT, <i>Valet</i>	} <i>Of Count Hugo.</i>
HOLM, <i>Groom</i>	

*Some Servants of the House.*

*The Scene is on the North Coast of the Scandinavian Peninsula.*

THE  
ANNIVERSARY:

A TRAGEDY.

---

ACT FIRST.

SCENE I.

*A Hall of a Northern Count's Castle, with several doors,  
and Gothic windows; a clock in the back-scene.*

*Elvira. (Her harp in her arms, ending her music with  
gradually lighter softly floating tones.)*

Even as that last note on the harp expired  
That my weak touch awoke, or like the waves,  
That on the lake still faint and feebler grow,  
Till on the shore they vanish,—Oh might I  
Fade from this life away!—

Far, far removed  
From happy realms of youth, by love enslaved  
In regions wild, oh when shall I behold

Fate's welcome hand stretched forth to lead me home !—

*(She leans her head on the harp, and remains for a little while silent. A string breaks ; ELVIRA starts up terrified ; the harp falls, still sounding, on the ground.)*

Oh Heaven !—

*(She tries to compose herself.)*

Am I awake ?—'Twas but a string  
That broke, and struck too suddenly mine ear,  
And this was all. Nothing there is of new  
Nor fearful, but my childish agitation.—  
Yet rose my hair on end ;—a shuddering seized  
My limbs, and like a drizzling chilly shower  
O'erspread my frame.—Was it the loneliness  
That scared me, or the twilight shades obscure,  
That stilly crept around, as I pursued  
My cheerless lay ?—Or was that startling sound  
An answer to the question tremblingly  
Even now preferred ?—New terror fills again  
My labouring breast.—A sound,—a wave,—how well  
Are these fit emblems deem'd of mortal life !—  
The foaming wave, that breaks amid the storm,  
Dash'd on the rock,—it is a wave no less,  
Than that which glimmers to the silvery moon,  
When all the winds are still.—The breaking chord,  
No less than sounds that softly die away,  
May warn us of a friend's approaching doom.

*(Terrified by apprehension.)*

Oh Heavens,—if Hugo——

*(She pulls the bell long and violently. A servant enters.*

Are the hunters then  
Not yet returned ?

*Serv.* Not yet, my lady.

*Elv.* Go——

Send forth a messenger on horseback straight ;—  
Let him explore the forest ;—and return  
With tidings, if he hears them from afar.

## SCENE II.

ELVIRA, BERTHA, *who enters at an opposite door, with  
servants following her.*

*Ber.* Elvira, what alarms you ?—

*Elv.* Nothing—I——

*Ber.* Light in that chamber quickly !—

*(The servants go through the back-scene, and shortly  
afterwards, candles are brought in.)*

Nay, your bell

Rang long and loudly. In your looks I trace

Confusion ;—How is this ?—your favourite harp

Lies on the ground neglected. *(Smiling.)* Did some ghost  
Mock at your music from sepulchral realms ?

*Elv.* If thus—my weakness is betrayed,—yet still,  
From you, my sister, might I hope forgiveness.—  
But for my husband's life, anxiety  
To-night restless seized me.

*Ber.* Is to-day

The first that he has spent in woods remote ;—  
Or in your native Spain did husband never  
Thus roam abroad to join the sylvan chase ?

*Elv.* Oh *there* breathe softer gales—and all the land  
With flowers is broidered. Mid the sweet perfume  
Of olive woods is traced the scent of game ;  
And even to forests wild the milder moods  
Of a mild clime extend.—*There* is the chase  
A joy by danger unalloyed. But *here*,  
It is not pleasure, but a mutual war—  
Alternate murder.—High amid the cliffs,  
Where eagles hover mid eternal snows,  
And pine trees shed around their twilight gloom,  
Contentds the hunter, trusting to his spear,  
With bears that rend him, if his arm should fail.—  
Wolves howl (those dire hyenas of the north)  
In trackless deserts. Deep abysses yawn,  
All unforeseen, beneath his wandering step,  
And avalanches from the mountains roll,  
Whelming the hapless wanderer in their course.—  
In such a clime say, Bertha, can I cease  
To tremble for his fate ?

*Ber.* Why, men are born  
To venture, even as women are to love ;—  
And here we love the valiant—such approved,  
In battle or the chace. (*In jest.*) The hardy soul  
Of northern maids no phantoms dare invade ;—  
For them yet lives, from Runic ages drawn,  
A consolation. From their mouldering towers  
Spirits invisible come forth to guard  
The daring hunter—needs but his firm faith  
Their guidance to secure.

*Elv.* Oh, you know not——

*Ber.* Besides, that many a well-remembered charm  
Warns him of every danger. On those days  
Unlucky deem'd, the northern damsel still  
Confines her knight at home ; for, from the world  
Of spirits, she has knowledge of the time.

(*ELVIRA shrinks and trembles.*)

But you grow pale, and shudder.—What is this ?

*Elv.* I was—but you will scorn my fear—yet listen.—  
I sat here in the twilight, lost in thought,  
And wearily—my harp-songs, one by one,  
Had died away. Obscure sepulchral thoughts  
Came o'er me unawares ;—when, all at once,  
A harp-string broke, and, with vibration shrill,  
Sounded at first as when, in mid-air, screams  
The wounded eagle. Then, ah me ! the tones  
Did in such low deep murmurings expire,  
It seemed a dying groan.

*Ber.* (*With cheerfulness.*) You know not yet  
The ways of northern spirits. It is true,  
Beyond your Pyrenees, guitars may breathe  
From shadowy hollows, and terrific steeps,  
Prophetic music. But, in these cold realms,  
Spiritual guests another language hold.—  
Down through the chimney's narrow throat the winds  
All blow with swelling cheeks. Then all the doors  
At once fly open ;—hands invisible  
Extinguish every light. The affrighted stork,  
Screaming, departs from the devoted house.  
The roof-tree cracks, portending sudden fall ;—  
Owls, great as eagles, at the window peck,



While in the chimney-corner, spitting fire,  
Black cats are station'd ; and at last behold,  
Dancing in flames of blue and green, appears  
Even a whole armament of imps from hell ;  
But if you hear not, close upon your ear,  
The owl cry,—“ Hugo !” you need never fear  
That he will not return.

*Elv. (Reproachfully.)* Bertha !—and yet  
Thou mean'st it well ;—by jesting wouldst beguile  
And tranquillize my spirit. Oh, were this  
But apprehension !

*Ber.* Say, what is it more ?

*Elv.* Past sufferings now their wonted power assert,  
Even in my inmost heart ; for at the chace  
Perish'd my husband Carlos—Otto's father.

*Ber.* How ?——

*Elv.* He fell, his horse and he together,  
And, in the fall, itself by accident  
Discharging, his own carabine then gave  
The mortal wound.

*Ber.* Ah ! then, forgive, I pray,  
My ill-timed mirth. But, tell me, why was this  
So long from me concealed ?—

*Elv.* Thy brother, Bertha,  
Shuns all remembrance of that sad event ;  
For Carlos was his friend, and was to him  
Indebted for his life. The creditor  
And debtor, more than brothers, loved each other.

*Ber.* Thou knew'st my brother, then, while Carlos lived ?

*Elv. (Confused.)* No—yes——

*Ber.* How's this?—You leave me a free choice  
Of Yes and No. Thy lord was Hugo's friend ;—  
You must have known each other.

*Elv.* We—it was—(*After she has by degrees forced herself to look up at BERTHA.*)

Sister ! thy pure and penetrating mind  
I know will seal Elvira's condemnation ;  
Yet must I tell thee what has been to me  
The o'erflowing source of anguish. Hugo !—yes—  
I knew him—nay, I LOVED him yet before  
The sudden death of Carlos.

(*She turns herself away ; BERTHA goes from her with the expression of disapprobation. After a pause, ELVIRA resumes.*)

Therefore, now,  
A leaf that rustles in the evening breeze  
Will make me tremble. God has given me Hugo.—  
But still, methinks, just vengeance lies in wait,  
With sharp extended sabre, o'er the head  
Of that devoted sinner, that, led on  
By passion wild, could dare, though but in thought,  
To anticipate a husband's early doom.—  
Therefore dread apprehension haunts Elvira,  
That she, too soon and suddenly, may lose  
The gift bestow'd, but *not deserved*, of Heaven.

(*BERTHA returns, looking on her as if with compassion.*)

*Ber.* That conscience thus disturbs thine inward peace,  
Bear humbly as a purifying penance.  
It is my brother Hugo whom thou lovest,

And Hugo's sister cannot judge Elvira.

*(They embrace with emotion, and go severally to the windows. The rushing of the wind, already heard, becomes stronger and more perceptible in the few moments of silence.)*

*Elv.* Hear how the wind awakens on the shore,  
And the North sea is roaring. All the stars  
Are veil'd in clouds, and from the obscure horizon  
Comes the thick snow, by raging tempests driven ;  
And, like the sands of the Arabian desert,  
In dusty whirlwinds rises up again,  
Covering the numb'd and frozen earth with wreaths,  
Like church-yard mounds, as if to mark the graves  
Of those that in the reckless storm have perish'd.

*(She comes from the window.*

To me it rustles, even as if the air  
Were filled with vultures' wings.—Oh Bertha, Bertha !—  
Could'st thou but teach me to restrain my fears  
For Hugo's safety !

*Ber.* Be composed, I pray you,  
With this assurance, that a band of hunters,  
On Danish horses mounted, cannot lose  
Their way through well-known woods. Besides, when  
clouds

Obscure the stars, still through the flaky drift,  
A soft resplendence falls to guide their course,  
Even mid the darkest paths of rocky vales.  
We call it SNOWLIGHT ;—but in your warm climes  
Even is the name unknown.

*(The sounds of hunting are heard faintly, and at a*

*far distance ;—first the cry of hounds, and afterwards the winding of horns.)*

*Elv. (Again at the window.)* Ha ! Bertha, listen !—  
Hear'st thou not ?—Now, there rises on mine ear  
What seems the cry of hounds.

*Ber. (Goes up to her.)* 'Tis true ;—but yet  
Far distant.

*Elv.* No ;—I hear the sound of horns.  
Such notes the hunter uses to recall  
A straggling brother, on their homeward way,  
That all may come together.  
*(With gladness, leaving the window.)*

It is Hugo !—

*Ber. (Who remains.)* He is arrived, methinks, for now  
I hear  
The tread of horses in the outer court.

*Elv.* Oh, Heaven be praised !—How like a bride I  
hasten

To meet his kiss again, even though he staid  
But for an hour away !

*Ber. (Calling at one of the doors.)* Otto, my dear !  
Come hither.

*Otto. (From within.)* Yes, directly.

*Ber.* Nay, make haste,—  
Arrange your pictures at another time.  
Come, for your father and his wild Black Dane  
Are just arriving.

## SCENE III.

ELVIRA, BERTHA, OTTO.

*Otto.* Who ?——*Ber.* Come down, I say !——

*Otto.* My father ?—Listen !—Wilt thou never, then,  
 Bear this in mind ?—My father is no more !—  
 He was no native of this northern clime ;  
 Count Hugo is my mother's husband only. *(Exit.)*

## SCENE IV.

ELVIRA, BERTHA.

*(ELVIRA, who had intended to go with OTTO, comes  
 again forward.)*

*Ber.* Will you not go then to the castle-gate ?

*Elv.* Can I ?—Oh that boy's words have lamed the wings  
 Of joy whereon I soar'd.

*Ber.* Poor sister ! Yes,—

I know :—that boy so mild and generous  
 Unwittingly presents, as in a mirror,  
 An image of thy guilt.

*Elv. (Much moved.)* To me most painful  
 His presence is, and yet I cannot bear  
 His absence. Oft I wish that he would go,—

Yet cover him with kisses.—What is marriage,  
Unblest by children?—Hugo loves this boy  
Paternal, and gladly would have gained  
In him a son.—But Otto loves me only.—  
Some secret impulses of Nature turn  
His heart from foreign love ;—and unseen ties  
Still draw him to his country. He is placed  
Between us like a wall dividing flames.—  
Flickering they gleam above his head on high,—  
And meet together. *(Sighing deeply.)*  
But, alas ! in one  
United they are never !

## SCENE V.

ELVIRA, BERTHA, OTTO, KOLBERT, *(who comes in  
soon after OTTO.)*

*Otto. (Rejoiced.)* Bertha ! Mother !  
'Tis not Count Hugo that has now arrived.—  
No ;—they are foreigners, with Spanish dresses ;—  
They talk in Spanish. Oh the well-remember'd  
Long absent tones were lovely to mine ear !—  
Come !—quickly—let the strangers be admitted !

*Kol.* My lady, there is here a foreign Lord,  
Whom servants of the Ambassador of Spain  
Have guided to this castle ; and he asks  
To see its owner,—the Count Oerindur.

*Elv.* His name ?

*Kol. (Considering.)* Don—Oh forgive me!—foreign sounds,—

They are so hard—I will go ask again. *(Going.)*

*Elv.* Nay, stop!—whoever this may be,—Go tell him That we now wait the Count's return from hunting.—  
Meanwhile conduct them straight to the best chambers ;—  
And on their train let others give attendance.

*(KOLBERT goes out.)*

*Otto.* Mother,—let me receive this guest with greeting  
After the fashion of his native land.

*Elv.* Go then—but ask him not, too forwardly,  
His name or business.

*Otto. (Rejoiced, and proudly.)* Nay, he is a SPANIARD ;—  
To bid him welcome I need ask no more. *(Exit.)*

#### SCENE VI.

ELVIRA, BERTHA.

*Elv. (Disquieted.)* Bertha ! what means all this ?—

*Ber.* A visit surely

From Spain, wherein my brother lived so long,  
And where he gained his bride,—this cannot be  
To *him* a cause of wonder,—though it seems  
That you are vex'd and anxious.

*Elv.* I confess it.

It seems as if my labouring breast were prest  
By some huge weight of marble.

*Ber.* What exists,

Or may exist to dread, best knows ELVIRA.—

*One only cause I know.*

*Elv. One cause !—and what ?—*

*Ber. That out of Spain, methinks, but little good  
My brother yet has drawn, although you praise  
That land so highly.*

*Elv. How shall I explain  
These doubtful words ?—*

*Ber. Grown up here, in the north,  
Towering and proud as are our native pines,  
(Though he was born abroad) from earliest years,  
Count Hugo seem'd the chosen ornament  
Of northern heroes. Pure and openly  
Reveal'd to all, even like the heaven's clear blue,  
His soul spoke in his eyes ; where all beheld  
Warm-hearted friendship, truth, and fortitude.  
Men praised him as a warrior that would grace  
Imperial rank ; while ladies silently  
Wove in their hearts for him the myrtle crown,  
And for the youthful victor sigh'd in secret.*

*Elv. (With animation.) Ay, such he was !—Nor less ad-  
mired in Spain ;—*

*There, deem'd a new Apollo, on the shores  
Of modern Hebrus ; so to every heart  
He gave delight, while he destroy'd repose.  
Oh, how thine ardent praise supplies to me  
The best defence of my too ardent passion !—  
For this I love you, sister !      (She embraces BERTHA.)*

*Ber. (Earnestly.) You do wrong  
In this—for we are RIVALS.*

*Elv. (Surprised.) Sister !—How ?—*



*Ber.* Hugo, methinks, with *you* is but the idol  
 Of sensual perceptions—but for me *(Earnestly.)*  
 I love him SOUL for SOUL, like those who love  
 In realms of light. That *your own* happiness  
 Might be secure, you fixed on him ; but *I*  
 Would wish *himself* no less to be endow'd  
 With peace of mind ; and *this*, I fear, he knows  
 No longer !—

*Elv.* How ? not happy ?—he is mine,  
 And if he loves me, then he must be so.

*Ber.* *(With a melancholy smile, and doubtfully, shaking  
 her head.)*

With inward peace his bosom deeply fill'd,  
 And singing as he goes, when winter comes,  
 To southern realms the white swan hies away.  
 Thence duly he returns, with clearer voice,  
 And plumage more resplendent.—*Not so, Hugo !*  
 Borne through the azure kingdoms of the main,  
 Gaily he went, unruffled as the swan,  
 Strong as the mountain-eagle. But, alas !  
 As he went forth, not so did he return  
 To his paternal hearth and anxious friends.

As in your bosom, so in his prevails  
 A storm of passions fierce that blaze away  
 The torch of his internal energy.—  
 His lock'd up bosom, that but ill conceals  
 The impulse to wild pleasure ; and his looks  
 Retiring, dark,—that when they meet in yours,  
 Gleam after gleam of self-destroying fire— *(She pauses.)*

Ah, these are not the signs of happiness !—

*That cannot live, unless where it is fed  
By calm repose and peace.*

*Elv.* A truth that I  
Feel deeply through my ever-wild emotions.—  
But can'st thou, pure unspotted soul—Can'st thou  
Teach us to quench these fires? If not, be silent,  
And let them blaze till their unhappy fire  
Consume itself, and flame is lost in flame!—  
(*She is going out, when KOLBERT enters, meeting her.*)  
How now!—What news?

## SCENE VII.

ELVIRA, BERTHA, KOLBERT.

*Kol.* The messenger, my lady,  
Is from the forest now return'd.

*Elv.* And where  
Then is the Count?

*Kol.* He was not to be found.

*Elv.* (*Trembling.*) Oh Heavens!

*Ber.* (*Anxiously.*) Not to be found?

*Kol.* An hour ago,  
The hunters with their horns from all the hills  
Made signals. But in vain. The Count, and Holm  
His groom, were absent both.

*Ber.* Ha! kindle torches!  
Let all go forth that can be spared at home,

c

And every horse be saddled in the stable ;—  
One for myself.

*Elv.* Will you go then ?

*Ber.* 'Tis mine

To act ;—you tremble only.—Venal slaves  
Labour too lightly, if no watchful eye  
Is present, to constrain them to their duty.

*Elv.* I will go with you.

*Ber.* Nay, you are too tender

For weather such as this. Even I myself,  
At such an hour may not go forth unguarded.

*(She retires into the next apartment.)*

*Elv.* *(After a short pause.)* Oh I shall perish  
With anguish, even before 'tis ascertained  
If what I dread in truth has come to pass !—  
That fearful omen of the broken string !—

*(Cheerful sounds of hunting horns are heard  
approaching.)*

Ha ! Bertha ! heard you not these joyful notes  
Even at the gate, contending with the storm ?—  
The Count is near !

*Ber.* *(Coming in dressed in fur.)* I hear, and am rejoiced.

#### SCENE VIII.

ELVIRA, BERTHA, HOLM.

*Holm.* My lady, I have gladly come to say  
That we are safe return'd—my lord and I.

*Elv.* Where?

*Holm.* He is just now gone into his chamber.

*Elv.* Would he not come to me?

*Holm.* He could not come,

As he is now ;—nor let himself be seen,—

Covered with blood.

*Elv.* (*Terrified.*) For Godsake—tell me then,—  
Does Hugo bleed?

*Holm.* No ;—it is but the blood  
Of a wild boar, by the count's single arm  
O'erthrown.—Ah, had you seen that glorious fight!

*Elv.* What?

*Holm.* Why the fight betwixt the count  
And that wild beast. Old Ranger found the track.—  
“It is not late!” cried he,—I mean my lord,—  
(Though it was five o'clock,) and so he rush'd—  
In God's name, on at once through bush and briar,  
Without his usual arms ; for he had given  
His rifle-piece and horn away before.  
It cost about an hour. At last my lord  
Cried out, “Hurra!”—The dogs flew on like lions ;  
But right and left, they soon began to fall  
Wounded and bleeding on the snow. The count  
Still had his spear, and would have used it nobly ;—  
But his horse rear'd, as if he warning took  
From the torn dogs, and would not on. My lord  
Dismounted ! On the instant then the boar  
After his manner thought to give him welcome.—

(*ELVIRA listens with increasing interest.*)

The ground was soft and crumbling ;—and, by Heaven,

Great was the risk ! For one brief moment then  
 I was alarmed !—But ere the beast could turn,  
 Our noble master, now his blood was up,  
 All raging like his adversary, seized him  
 Even with his hands, and tore him to the ground.—  
 I,—never slow,—sprung on him as he lay,  
 And then we stabb'd him in the breast and throat,  
 With all our might, till his life-blood was spent.—  
 He lay there cold and stiff at last ; while we,  
 I warrant you, were hot enough with toil.

*Elv.* (*Who turns away shuddering.*) What horrid pleasure !

*Holm.* There we left him *then* ;—

But all are now gone forth, (dark as it is,)  
 To bring the monster home upon a sledge.

*Ber.* Go, Holm, and beg the Count to send us word,  
 As soon as he is drest.

*Holm.* I shall, my lady.

#### SCENE IX.

BERTHA, ELVIRA, (*who, affected by the story, supports  
 herself on a chair.*)

*Ber.* How is it with you, sister ?—Why are thus  
 Your looks disturb'd ?

*Elv.* That fearful narrative !—  
 How vividly all came before my sight !—  
 Oh horrible !

*Ber.* Exaggeration all !—

He who assists to cut away a branch  
Makes it a towering tree.

*Elv. (Possessed by her own fancies.)* Oh Heaven protect  
me!

He is a raging tiger!

*Ber. (Surprised.)* Who?

*Elv.* Count Hugo.

*Ber.* Surely you dream.

*Elv.* Ay, 'twas a frightful dream,  
That on our marriage night o'erpower'd my soul.—  
I thought to embrace my husband—when behold!—  
A tiger glared upon me.—While I tell it,  
Even now delirium almost seizes me.—  
I could not leave him;—and I kiss'd his claws,  
And bloody teeth.—He——

*(She pauses, overpowered by her imagination.)*

*Ber.* Phantoms all!—the offspring  
Of heated blood.

*Elv.* Oh no!—too true—too near  
Is the resemblance!—Bertha—say yourself—  
Does not the Count now every day become  
More wild and daring?—When he would embrace me,  
I throw myself all shuddering on his breast—\*  
He is indeed a tiger—whom I must  
With terror hate; or even to madness love.

Even while he gently leans himself upon me,—  
Sighs lovingly, with eyes demanding kisses;  
Even then within those eyes a frightful gleam

---

\* There is here a slight deviation from the original.

Of-times appears, that like the lightning's flash  
Pierces my frame ; and mine own chosen husband  
Seems to me like a wild beast of the forest,  
That loves me,—yet might rend me, even to death !—

*(After a pause, and earnestly.)*

May Heaven protect your pure and virgin heart  
From such internal furies, that, conflicting,  
Alternate urge me on to hate and love. *(Exit.)*

*Ber. (Having looked after her.)* Are these dire sufferings  
    · then in fervid climes

Called *love* ?—*(Deeply moved.)*—Oh had my brother staid  
    at home !

## ACT SECOND.

*HUGO's chamber, with folding doors in the perspective.*

## SCENE I.

*HUGO, in a rich full dress, resting on a sofa. On the table was candles, now burnt very low. After a few moments, enter BERTHA.*

*Ber.* So now the blood-stain'd hunter of the woods  
Again is visible.

*Hugo.* Ay—visible,  
And pure from outward stains.

*Ber.* And utterly  
Exhausted, as it seems.

*Hugo.* Ay—God be praised!—  
'Tis this corporeal frame that still disturbs  
The soul's tranquillity with chilling fears,  
Or fond desires. To be exhausted thus  
Is my chief luxury; for this I toil;—  
For, when thus wearied, I obtain repose.

*Ber.* (*Pointing to her heart.*) *Here*—dost thou feel re-  
pose?—There was a time  
Thou had'st it ever.



*Hugo.* Ay—there *was* a time—

(*He loses himself in thought ; and, after a considerable pause, speaks as if he had forgotten BERTHA'S presence* )

If it were possible !—

*Ber.* (*Surprised.*) What then ?

*Hugo.* Oh, nothing !—

If one could make the present like the past,  
Transform what has been, into what is now,  
And what is now, to nothing !—This was all.

(*He pauses.*)

Where is ELVIRA ?—Came she not with you ?—

*Ber.* She is—she *was*, I would have said.

*Hugo.* (*Interrupting her.*) Would'st thou ?

There !—*is* and *was*—you have it as before ;  
Present and past.—To day and yesterday !—  
Once it was different. Cheerfully she flew  
To meet me, when I came within the gates.  
But now——

*Ber.* Thou wrong'st her heavily. To-night,  
She, for thy sake, has suffered fearful anguish,  
Because, amid the darkness and the storm,  
Thou wert abroad.

*Hugo.* Wherefore has she not come ?  
I am return'd in safety home, and still  
Is she alarm'd.

*Ber.* No—but the marvellous tale  
That Holm just now related, deeply moves  
And agitates her timid soul.

*Hugo.* What tale ?

*Ber.* How the wild boar attack'd you, and you seized  
Him in your turn, and conquer'd him, like Sampson,  
Or Hercules, that with his hands alone,  
A lion could destroy.

*Hugo.* He is a fool  
That Holm—a babbling fool. 'Twas nothing.  
Chance made the encounter somewhat rough, and vex'd  
me.—

Danger there could be none. Yet was the tale  
Not suited for Elvira.

*Ber.* So it seem'd;  
For almost like a corse with open eyes,  
So haggard, and so pale she look'd, when Holm  
The story ended. Scarcely could her limbs  
Support her trembling frame. Yourself she call'd  
A ravenous beast, and then began to tell  
A frightful dream, that, on her bridal-night,—  
(*Hugo turns to go out.*)

But you are going?

*Hugo.* I will go to her.—  
If against me her heart has thus been turn'd,  
I must take care to win it back again.—  
'Tis but when absent that Elvira hates me.

*Ber.* Yet leave her time to be more tranquillized,  
Dear brother, and meanwhile impart to me,  
Thy faithful Bertha, what in truth it is,  
That so disturbs thy peace.—'Tis plain to all,  
In your intoxicated looks, the flame  
Of mutual passion glows, and you possess  
Each other with the church's benediction.

*Hugo. (Half aside.)* The blessing of a priest,—but not  
of Heaven !

*Ber.* This union of true hearts will not remain  
Unblest by children.—What—I beg you tell me—  
What can thus drive you from and to each other,  
Even like two ships on a tempestuous sea,  
Asunder borne, or on each other dash'd ?

*Hugo.* Know I myself ?—Methinks the south and north  
Should never kiss each other—They are poles  
Of one straight line, divided by their axis.—  
If the blind efforts of fierce violence change  
That right line to a circle, and tie up  
The south and north together, for a space  
By force, they may be join'd ;—but like the steel  
Of a bent bow, that circle will return  
Ere long to what it was, and so remain.

*Ber.* To clear up riddles, and afford solution  
To anxious doubts like mine, comparisons  
Will not suffice.

*Hugo.* I have no more to give.—  
Even to myself, no less than to my friends,  
I am a riddle.—In my feverish being  
The hostile poles methinks are met together.—  
Born in the south, but here bred up, I feel  
Nor here, nor there, like one that is at home.—  
Even as a tree, whose roots dislike the north,  
Yet in the south, whose branches meet decay ;—  
*Here* frozen in the stem, and *there* with leaves  
Inflamed and parch'd.—Together in myself,  
I join both cold and heat,—and earth and Heaven,—  
Evil and good.

*Ber.* Delusive visions all!—

Though first in Spain thine eyes beheld the light,  
Yet were our parents both from the same stock  
Of northern worthies.

*Hugo.* Thine were so, 'tis true—

*My* parents were of different origin.

*Ber.* (*Surprised.*) How?

(*Hugo starts on perceiving that he has said more than  
he intended ; then becomes again tranquil.*)

*Hugo.* There is no reason now,

That I should still conceal, what on the field,  
Surrounded by his own victorious troops,  
While he lay dying in mine arms, thy father  
To me confided.

*Ber.* Ah!—what must I hear?

*Hugo.* That I AM NOT THY BROTHER.

*Ber.* (*Who sinks on a chair, covering her face.*) Oh! poor

Bertha! (*Suddenly she springs up again*)

Good Heavens!—and wherefore?

*Hugo.* What alarms you thus?

*Ber.* 'Tis nothing. Pray tell on.

*Hugo.* Thy noble father,

EDWIN of OERINDUR, was of his house  
The last. His lands were feudal, and were earn'd  
By warfare. Lingering Nature long refused  
An heir that might support his father's rank.  
Hopes came at length; but there were apprehensions,  
So feeble was the Countess, that the fruit  
Would break the sickly tree. Physicians, then,  
By words and writing, ordered her away  
To foreign baths, beneath a milder sky.

A lady (though but distantly) related  
To royal blood, disgraced by heresy,  
(For so they speak of us in southern climes)  
Without a change of title, might not venture  
At this time into Spain. A German house,  
Of Catholic persuasion, willingly  
Allow'd her theirs ; and thence it was, her son  
Received in Spain the German name of *Hugo*.

The uncertain life, and but with care supported,  
Of mother and of child, did not allow,  
For a long interval, of their return.  
Count Edwin, for his country's weal contending,  
Still with proud Eastern foes prolong'd the war ;  
And so the third year had begun, ere he  
Could taste the cup of pleasure. Then the mother  
Long'd ardently to place her blooming child  
In it's loved father's arms. But otherwise  
Had Fate decreed ; and she resign'd at last  
The long-expected blessing to the tomb.

*Ber. (Deeply affected.)* Oh, poor poor mother !—

*Hugo.* On her sad estate,  
Another, blest with children, took compassion.  
And that the Countess only, not thy father,  
Might have to weep o'er that calamity,  
A stratagem was plann'd.—A Spanish lady,  
Of race Castilian, then agreed to give  
A child of equal age, to be adopted  
By her despairing friend.

*Ber.* Can this be so ?—

A mother ?—

*Hugo.* Ay—*my* mother could ; and I  
Am that transplanted child, of Spanish race,  
Whose name I never learn'd. The Countess vow'd  
That secret never to divulge ; and thus  
I know not mine own proper origin.

*Ber.* Oh, may that race for ever be unknown,  
Disgraced by such a mother !

*Hugo.* Long deceived  
Was Hannah's lord ; and he caress'd me then  
As his own son,—till thine,—till BERTHA's birth ;  
Then all was told to him. He chose that still  
I should retain the name of OERINDUR.  
Yet, of a soul that could not brook deception,  
After thy mother's death, he told at last  
The secret to the king. An answer came,  
Couch'd in the form of an imperial deed,  
Secret and holograph, of import thus :—

“ The house of Oerindur, that still has been  
The firm support and pillar of our throne,  
Must, even despite of nature, be upheld.—  
To whomso'er the last of Oerindur  
Shall at his death deliver this diploma,  
That legatee, so gifted, shall possess  
(Or male or female) all its rights and power,  
And so, in turn, transmit them to his heir.”

This writing, then, the Count bestow'd on me  
When death was fast approaching ; and for this  
Have I for ever barter'd peace of mind.—  
Then far from hence, where I could claim no kindred,  
The bonds of nature led me to the land

Of golden fruits and flowers, that oft in dreams  
 Before me, through the clouds of distance gleam'd ;  
 Even as in ancient pictures we behold  
 Departed grandeur. With intent to trace,  
 If possible, mine ancestors, I went ;—  
 And though I found not them, I met ELVIRA ;—  
 Won her at last, and brought her from the south  
 To this wild region, where her heart, possess'd  
 With the same longing that I felt before,  
 Pines for her native land.

*Ber.* (*With pathetic emotion.*) Oh, farewell all  
 My golden dreams of pleasure !

*Hugo.* What is this ?  
 Bertha, what thus afflicts you ?

*Ber.* Oh, thou NAMELESS !  
 And can'st thou ask ?—Think on our early years ;  
 How we, from youth, grew up even like twin flowers,  
 That on the self-same stalk together bloom.  
 I loved you ;—nay, the fibres of my heart  
 With yours were intertwined. A sweet delusion  
 Sanctioned and rendered holy my attachment.  
 (*In tears.*) Now is the magic seal in pieces broke ;  
 My heart is broken with it.

*Hugo.* Bertha !—girl !—  
 Forget what Hugo said—love him again,  
 And he shall ever as a brother love thee.

*Ber.* (*After a long negative shaking of the head.\**)  
 Oh, no !—The dream is past and gone. The days

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\* Verneinender Kopfbewegung.

Of innocent love are past. No more shall I  
Embrace thee.—Thou art not an OERINDUR.  
Between a sister's and a woman's love,  
The veil is rent asunder. From this roof,  
My father's castle, where thy silence held me,  
If so thy Countess wills, I must away. *(Exit.)*

## SCENE II.

*HUGO alone, having looked, for a long while, after BERTHA.*

*Hugo.* She is indeed an angel!—So she was  
In years long past, when she essay'd to be  
My guide to heaven. When parted now from her,  
All hope is gone. Farewell to dreams of peace  
Or joy for evermore! *(He sinks into thought.)*

## SCENE III.

*HUGO, OTTO.*

*Otto.* So now, Lord Hugo!  
You are return'd at last?—

*Hugo. (In jest.)* DON OTTO!—yes—  
Here, as thou see'st.

*Otto.* And do'st thou mock at me,—  
The Spanish boy that bears a German name?  
Yet thou art in the right. I should have had



My father's name of Carlos. I have heard  
The Countess say it was her mother's fault  
Who call'd me OTTO !—'Tis too late to change ;  
And HUGO sounds still worse. But one request  
Remains, which thou could'st grant to make amends.

*Hugo.* Most willingly, if it is for thy good.  
But what have you to ask ?—

*Otto.* Only that I  
May wear once more the dress of Old Castile.

*Hugo.* No—no,—my child ; for that is hazardous.  
This climate is too cold. Besides, the people  
Would laugh at such a foreign garb.

*Otto.* Not so !—  
Look at this foreign guest who came to-night.

*Hugo.* What guest ?

*Otto.* Why, he who just appear'd before  
Your own arrival. Have you not been told ?—

*Hugo.* No—I know nothing of him.

*Otto.* Well,—but listen.  
No one has dared to laugh at that old man—  
And yet, even here he wears the Spanish dress—  
And looks in it, methinks, even like my father.

*Hugo.* Is he a Spaniard ?

*Otto.* That I warrant him.

*Hugo.* (*Anxiously.*) His name ?

*Otto.* I might have known ;—but this my mother  
Forbade to ask. However, he has told me,  
That he is of our country, and to her  
Related. Every one at Old Tortosa  
Full well he knows, and has to me described

How my aunt Donna Rosa lived, and how  
*(Smiling.)* She used to scold.—I know that he will please  
 you.

*Hugo.* I know not that.—Ha,—wherefore on this day,  
 Of all the year ?—'Tis not the most auspicious  
 To meet a Spaniard.

*Otto.* Nay, but he is good,—  
 And longs to see you.—May he now come in ?

*Hugo.* No—not yet, Otto. Wait till I have seen  
 Thy mother.

## SCENE IV.

HUGO, OTTO, ELVIRA, (*who enters in great emotion,  
 and can scarcely speak.*)

*Elv.* Hugo !—

(*She draws near to him, and says, in a significant  
 and loud voice,*)

BERTHA !—

*Hugo.* Why—how's this ?—  
 What mean those looks—this piercing tone of voice ?

*Elv.* Ha, traitor ! dost thou not grow pale, if I  
 Pronounce the name of BERTHA ?

*Hugo.* Thou'rt insane !

*Elv.* Oh that indeed I were !—Oh, poor Elvira !  
 This heart so long deceived—now rent in sunder !—

*Otto.* Say, my Lord Count, what thus affects my mother ?

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*Hugo.* Thou can'st not understand the cause—Dire  
snakes,  
Like those that furies wear upon their heads,  
Are twining round her heart.—Go leave us, boy,  
Till she is better. (*Exit Otto.*)

*Elv.* (*Rising from a chair into which she had thrown  
herself.*)

This it was that brought  
Lord Hugo to the frozen north again !—  
Thou knew'st a flower *there* bloom'd beneath the snow.  
For this was I enticed away from home,—  
From sacred ground, where homage still is paid  
To the blest Virgin,—that thou here might'st love  
An earthly maiden, and to her might offer  
In sacrifice thy wife. And therefore now,  
This loving sister, with unblushing front,  
Herself to me acknowledged for a RIVAL !

*Hugo.* (*Sternly.*) Hold !—pour thy poison forth, lest it  
corrode

The cup that holds it—But on me alone  
Let all be shed ;—no venomous drop shall touch  
That pure seraphic soul.

*Elv.* Seraphic !—pure !—  
Ay—then defend her ;—nay, I beg you will ;—  
She and yourself defend !—Or can'st thou not  
At once confess the truth ?—I ask but this,—  
Grant me conviction, that I may at once  
Resolve to live or die !

*Hugo.* Needs there defence  
Of this exalted soul against the assaults

Of mean suspicion?—As a guardian angel  
Might love an earthly being, she has loved me,—  
And as to the blest Virgin thou would'st yield  
Thy homage, so my looks are turned to her.

*Elv.* No—no—it shall not be—I will alone  
Possess thee!—Mine alone that right shall be,  
And with no angel shared,—not even with Heaven!

*Hugo.* Thou rav'st—but it is well—Call down Heaven's  
wrath

On our devoted heads, *on ours alone!*  
As thou hast said, I fear it is indeed.  
Since I began to love thee, I have lost  
All share of heaven, and sold myself to hell!

*Elv.* Oh my parch'd brain!— (*She pauses.*)

When she to-day described  
How like a northern pine-tree thou hadst grown,  
The chief of heroes; and pourtray'd the warrior  
Who should have held imperial rank; the victor,  
For whom each maiden had in secret sigh'd;  
Wherefore did I behold within her eyes  
The kindling fire of passion? Above all,  
Why for so many months did she conceal  
That she was not thy sister?

*Hugo.* Oh, most unjust!—  
She learn'd that secret never till to-day.

*Elv.* (*Doubting.*) How?—She was ignorant?—

*Hugo.* She was an orphan.  
To spare her more affliction, I conceal'd  
Till now that she was yet more destitute,  
And had no brother. When my tale was told,  
Weeping, she did lament the innocent ties

Thus torn asunder, that so long had join'd us.  
Then, to rebuild the barrier so dissolved,  
She went to share the painful news with thee.

*Elv.* If this I might believe !—'Tis true I heard not  
Her story to an end ; but angrily  
I cast her from my breast. If she indeed  
Was not aware——

*Hugo.* Had she that secret known,  
And kept so long conceal'd, would she have *now*  
Reveal'd it ?—

*Elv. (Repentingly.)* Hugo !—

*Hugo.* Still proceed !—Obey  
The fiery impulse of thy heated blood,  
Scorch'd by the southern sunbeams, that can find  
No solace but in murder, when the fiend  
Of jealousy assails thee !—Now prepare  
Thy poisonous draughts ;—I know thou hast  
Enough in store ;—or, rather with the steel  
Thou wearest, stab me in a last embrace,  
And drain my heart's last blood for nourishment !— \*

*Elv. (Trembling.)* Hugo ! can'st thou forgive me ?

*Hugo.* I deplore  
Thy misery and my own.

*Elv.* Can Bertha ?

*Hugo.* Freely.—  
She in her heart is conscious of no crime ;—  
She can look boldly, and defy suspicion—  
But we have not even power to trust *ourselves*,  
(*Half aside.*) If e'er we cast our eyes upon *the past* !—

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\* A few touches have here been *intentionally* left out.

*Elv. (Alarmed.)* Hugo ! why these remembrances?—

The wife

Of Carlos loved thee ; and for this, in turn,

Now feels the raging pangs of jealousy.

*Hugo. (In a hollow voice.)* To-day?—Ay, ay ! This day is still accursed.

*Elv. (Anxiously.)* To-day !—What mean'st thou?—

*Hugo.* Was it not the time

When Carlos perish'd?—

*Elv. (Covering her face.)* Oh, Almighty Powers!—

*(The candles are gradually burnt out, and the stage becomes obscure.)*

*Hugo.* Remember'st thou how, in the chapel then,

Surrounded by the coffins of thy fathers,

We met in secret, 'mid the mouldering graves,

Sadness without, but mutual joy within?

How then and there——

*Elv.* Hold—hold ! or thou wilt kill me.

*Hugo. (After a considerable pause, and at last with superstitious terror.)*

If *now* he were to come, at this dark hour,

When love at last, by its own fire consumed,

Burnt out even like those candles, laughs no more

In either heart—if out of these grim vaults

He came as a remembrancer !

*Elv. (Shuddering.)* Oh, horrible !

*(A short stillness ; afterwards knocking at the door)*

*HUGO and ELVIRA support each other.)*

*Hugo. Elv. (Together.)* Ha !——

## SCENE V.

HUGO, ELVIRA, VALEROS, OTTO.

*Carrying a light, and holding VALEROS by the hand.**Hugo. (After advancing fearfully towards the door, starts back with horror.)*

'Tis his ghost !

*Val. (Stops astonished.)* How ?—you have led me wrong,  
Good youth !—Is this the chamber ?*Elv. (Fixing her eyes on him.)* Don Valeros !*Hugo.* Who ?*Elv.* Carlos' father !*Val.* Then you know me ?*Elv.* I do—yes,—you are he !—Pray, pardon us.*Val.* Nay, pardon me, and my young friend, whose  
warmth,

When he once knew me, would not be controul'd.—  
Since I thus coming suddenly have seem'd  
A ghost and scared you, pray vouchsafe your hand  
For token that I live.

*(She kisses his hand eagerly. He embraces her with emotion.)*

I thank you, daughter !—

*(To HUGO.)* My lord, *we* meet to-day for the first time :—  
Why I presume to style your Countess, daughter,  
Pray let this letter tell for me. It bears

The hand and seal of our ambassador.

*Hugo. (Who receives the letter, without turning his eyes from VALEROS.)*

Oh, certainly, there needs no other proof—  
Your likeness to Don CARLOS——

*Val. (Tenderly.)* She is all  
That now remains to me of my loved son—

*(After a pause.)*

Of his best treasures you are now possessor,—  
The husband of his widow ;—of his child  
The father. And the love of both besides  
Becomes your heritage.—But I have none !—  
Are you offended that the poor should come  
To share in wealth like thine ?

*Hugo. (Giving him his hand.)* Most welcome, sir !

*Elv.* We could not look for you.

*Hugo.* If I am right,

In the West Indies you were governor.

*Val.* Thither I went nine years ago to gain  
The golden fleece, that ever tempts a Spaniard.—  
I won it ;—but, alas ! not as of old,  
The Argonautic leader, did I bring  
From thence a royal consort. In that clime  
Mine perish'd. Yet still blest, as I believed,  
With a loved son, that in his native Spain  
Was honour'd, and with whom I yet might find  
Repose and comfort, I applied, by letter,  
For liberty my station to resign.  
The wish'd for answer came ;—but the same hour



Brought me the tidings that my son—my Carlos—  
*(Much moved.)*

No longer lived to welcome my return.

Soft favouring breezes gaily fill'd our sails,  
 And our ship lightly moved, as if rejoicing  
 To bear those happy pilgrims on their way  
 That long'd for home. At length we hear the cry  
 Of "Land!" They climb upon the ropes to view  
 The distant shore that in the sunlight lay,  
 Even like a summer cloud amid the sea.

Not sadness,—a dim horror seized upon me,  
 While that pale cloud did clearer shapes assume.—  
 Phantoms obscure, yet threatening, hover'd round me ;—  
 With doubts and terror thus assail'd at last,  
 I trod the well-known shore. I would have wept,  
 As was most fitting, for the untimely dead,  
 But no tears fell.—Like one that from himself  
 Starts back affrighted, at Tortosa's gate,  
 I stood alone.

I felt not then like one  
 That *has* sustain'd misfortune. No ;—it seem'd,  
 That the first agony remain'd before me,  
 Of parting with my son.—

*(Hugo staggers, and supports himself on a chair.)*

But how is this ?—

My lord, you faint.—How pale he looks !

*Hugo. (Recovering himself.)* 'Tis nothing,—  
 A giddiness brought on by the fatigue  
 Of this day's chase.

*Elv. (Anxiously.)* Dear Hugo !

*Hugo.* As I said,

'Tis nothing to alarm you.—Now speak on,  
And let me hear.—'Tis over.

*Val.* No indeed !—

If you are ill, 'tis not the proper time,  
To tell the remnant of a tale like mine.

*Elv.* Shall obscure apprehension thus torment us !—  
Pray, sir, speak on.

*Val. (Drawing near to ELVIRA.)* Saw you the sad  
remains

Of Carlos on the bier ?

*Elv.* No ;—I was then

Unable to support——

*Val.* Or in the coffin ?

*Elv.* No.

*Otto.* I beheld that sight !—The castle hall  
Was hung with black, yet lighted full of candles ;—  
And in his long and narrow bed I saw  
My father laid—so pale,—yet fair to look upon,  
As is a marble statue, and the bust  
Alone was visible. His velvet mantle  
Was wrapt around him, with the embroider'd star  
Of Calatrava. (*With tears in his eyes.*) Many visitors  
From far and near came thither, and all wept  
And kiss'd his mantle's golden hem ; but none  
Ere dared to lift the cloak, or touch his hands.  
This was forbid by those who had the charge  
Of his embalment.

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*Val.* Oh, that I had never  
 Within that long-neglected grave beheld  
 What to my horrid fears gave confirmation !—  
 Is it not all determined ?—*There* before me  
 Were placed in dread reality the dreams,  
 That the mind's eye so long had fill'd ;—the veil  
 Was lifted up ;—the mantle drawn aside !

*Elv.* (*Anxiously.*) What,—nay, I pray you,—what did  
 you behold ?

*Val.* One hand upon his wound—the right arm stretch'd  
 And pointing downwards ;—in his hollow eyes  
 A lingering glare of anger ;—and the mouth  
 That might for others have been dumb *to me*  
 Spoke audibly—“ REVENGE ME—I AM MURDERED !”

*Elv.* Oh Heaven—if this were true !

*Hugo.* (*Pale, with tottering knees, supporting himself by  
 a chair, his eyes fixed and staring.*)

Aye—that, indeed,  
 Were horrible.

*Otto.* I pray you, sir, be silent !—  
 Lord Hugo now is ill.

*Hugo.* (*Angrily to Otto.*) Silence thyself !—  
 Be not so childish !—Pray, sir, is this all ?—  
 'Twas but your apprehension—was there then  
 No other trace ?

*Val.* Even as he there appear'd,  
 Lay Carlos when discovered in the wood.  
 So—(this I learn'd from him who guided me  
 To find his grave) the hand—the arm—the looks—  
 No wound but that alone which caused his death.



The left hand on that wound immoveable ;  
 The fingers firmly clinch'd, and the right arm  
 So rigidly extended.

Henceforth rose  
 Before me, and appear'd where'er I went,  
 What seem'd a northern light,—like that which here,  
 Bloodstain'd and dim, illumines your forests wild.  
 This was no more suspicion—'twas a guide—  
 A signal irresistible to lead  
 My footsteps onward to that land where first  
 The horrid sign was known. I came through France,  
 Through Germany, and all that lay between,  
 Till I beheld, at last, your towering hills  
 Of ice and snow.

'Twas not revenge alone,—  
 No fierce desire his murderer to destroy,  
 That led me onwards thus through half the world.  
 I seek him not ;—my soul revolts with horror,  
 Yet thirsts my spirit after full conviction !—  
 As to the eyes of one half blind, his form,  
 Now mild, now wrathful, ever floats before me ;—  
 Half seen, half lost, I know not if in truth  
 At his approach I meet him or recede.  
 And, pray, my lord, (*Turning to Hugo.*) explain this  
 contradiction,—  
 Sometimes, methinks, I long to see his life  
 In blood dissolve,—and (*Almost with tenderness.*) some-  
 times too it seems  
 As if I could forgive him !—

*Hugo.* (*Scarcely able to speak.*) I grow worse !  
 (*He staggers towards the door.*)

*Val.* (*To OTTO.*) My child, go take a light to guide the Count.

(*ELVIRA looks after him with staring eyes, and seemingly insensible. When he reaches the door, and OTTO is near him with the light, he falls down in a swoon to the ground.*)

*Otto.* (*A cry of terror.*) Ah !—

*Val.* Heavens !—

*Elv.* (*Waking from her trance.*) What is it ?—

*Otto.* See ! the Count !—

*Elv.* Oh God !

*Otto.* (*Calling at the door.*) Help—help ! Ho, Kolbert, help !

## ACT THIRD.

*A brilliant Hall. On the walls are pictures in the Spanish fashion, and landscapes, of which last, those mentioned in the first scene of this act are conspicuous.*

## SCENE I.

VALEROS, OTTO, *who brings him into the middle of the Hall.*

Otto. Look round, sir,—are you pleased?

Val. I am, indeed.

Otto. This is the Spanish hall, and these two doors  
Lead to the Spanish chambers. Lady Bertha  
Gave them that name. They are her favourite rooms.  
Her mother lived some years in Spain, and there  
Selected, with great pains, this tapestry ;  
And by her orders were these pictures done.  
See, *here* is Talavera.

Val. Is it so?

Otto. And *this*  
Contains the landscape of a famous mountain,  
Where the snow never melts, and mortal step  
Has never touch'd the summit.

*Val.* Yes—I know it.

*Otto.* But know'st thou that it is the diamond  
In the long chain of Pyrenees that forms  
The necklace of all Europe?

*Val.* Ay—indeed?

Who named it so?—

*Otto.* Who named it?—What a question!  
Think'st thou I know not, then, as well as any,  
That Europe is a woman?—other lands  
Her body form. We Spaniards are the head,  
And, thence, behold disdainfully the nations  
That are but her inferior limbs.

*Val.* See, now,

How speaks the proud Castilian in this child!—

*Otto.* Child!—ay, 'tis but too true. In this cold clime  
Youths of my age are look'd upon as children.  
Beneath our warmer sunlight, all endowments  
Ripen far earlier. Know'st thou not *this* view?  
It is that village of the Pyrenees  
That has the mineral waters. And *there*, too,  
Was BERTHA's mother.

*Val.* Strange!—I know the place—

It is Barège.

*Otto.* I like it not so well

As Talavera.

*Val.* (*Anxiously.*) Oh, nor I, indeed!—

(*Aside.*) Must I be thus compell'd to look again  
Into that vale obscure, where superstition  
To deeds unnatural brought a noble soul?—

That prophecy—this horrible suspicion—  
One of them, God be praised, must be unfounded !

*Otto.* And art thou falling into melancholy  
In such a brilliant scene ?—It would not please  
The Count to find thee thus !—

*Val.* (*Recovering from his distraction.*) Please whom ?

*Otto.* The Count.

To do you honour were those rooms thrown open ;  
In that rich chamber are you to be lodged ;  
And in this hall to-night will HUGO join you,  
With BERTHA and the COUNTESS.

*Val.* Is he now  
Recover'd ?

*Otto.* Almost well. But did I not  
Warn you that you should never in his presence  
Speak of my father ? *This* he cannot bear.

*Val.* 'Tis very strange !

*Otto.* Nay,—but I know the reason !

*Val.* (*Earnestly.*) Thou know'st ?—I pray thee tell me !

*Otto.* Thus it was.—

My father died just at the time when Hugo  
Would his own life have given that he had lived !

*Val.* How know'st thou that ?

*Otto.* Five years they were firm friends,—  
From that time onwards when the Count arrived  
In Spain a friendless foreigner.

*Val.* Indeed ?

*Otto.* Yes,—truly.—Then my father held Count Hugo  
As dear as his own son.

*Val.* But did the Count ?——



*Otto.* Ay, that in sooth.—It was reciprocal.

*Val.* Are you quite sure ?

*Otto.* Nay, there was ample proof.

Count Hugo once in public risk'd his life

To save my father.

*Val.* Was it so ?

*Otto.* Most certain.

*Val.* But how—and where ?

*Otto.* Now, only hear my story.—

'Twas at a bull-fight—one of those encounters

Where the bull only is to be enraged.—

Before the sport began, my father came,

Guiding some foreign ladies from above,

Down to the ring below ;—where they desired

Something—(I know not what)—to view more nearly.

There suddenly, a door by negligence

Left insecure sprang open ; and we heard

On every side loud screams—"The bull !—the bull !"—

The ladies fled ; and in their consternation

Lock'd up my father with the raging beast.—

"Where are the dogs ?—Unkennel them !"—This cry

Succeeded,—but no dogs appear'd.—The monster

Whetting his horns, with louring aspect then

Began his dread attack.—Then louder screams !—

"He's lost ! he's gone !" with horror fill'd our ears.—

But on the instant sprung like lightning down

From his high seat, the Count——

*Val.* (*Interrupting him.*) Aye—that was brave !—

*Otto.* Then drew his sword, and boldly struck the beast,

Who raging turn'd ; but that first stab was mortal ;—

When Hugo was assailing him again,  
He fell down with an hideous roar convulsed,  
And stretch'd ere long his stiffening limbs in death.—  
Then with loud shouts of wonder and applause  
The place resounded !

*Val.* But did'st thou behold  
That noble feat ?

*Otto.* Yes, I was there.

*Val. (Aside.)* Aye—this  
Has overpower'd my horrible suspicions ;  
And even in this mysterious house again  
I freely breathe.—(*To OTTO.*)—Now, for your narrative  
Of such a noble Spanish deed, I thank you.

*Otto.* What then the Count achieved to save his friend,  
My father would have gladly done for him.—  
Yet mark me—even such faithful friends at last  
Became divided.

*Val.* What ?—the smouldering fires  
Of evil wake again ? How happen'd it ?

*Otto.* I know not. At the time my father died,  
Three years or more had pass'd ; through which long space  
They had not seen each other. Even to this hour  
The Count laments that he was doom'd to lose  
His friend while they were yet unreconciled ;  
And *this* is now the cause—

*Val. (Half aside.)* Ay—*this* or conscience.—

*Otto.* And therefore on his friend's pale corse he fell,  
(Himself as pale) and kiss'd him, and exclaim'd,  
“ Carlos !—art thou irreconcilable ?”

Then weeping, he embraced me, till at last  
He sank exhausted.

*Val.* Weeping say'st thou? (*Aside.*) Um!  
Assassins do not use to weep!—

*Otto.* And now  
All for this reason is he sick and troubled,  
When aught reminds him of that sad event,  
Which, though he loved our native Spain so well,  
Drove him from thence to this cold northern clime.

*Val.* (*Aside.*) How strange!—with what uncertain war-  
fare still,  
Towards this man, in my bosom's narrow room,  
Do hate and love contend!—

*Otto.* Look! here he comes.  
Now will I go, and tell the Lady Bertha,  
Who longs to see you. (*Exit.*)

## SCENE II.

VALEROS, HUGO.

*Hugo.* (*Earnestly.*) Once more welcome, knight,  
To these obscure old towers, whose best apartments  
Are, as you see, prepared for your reception.

*Val.* Welcome, my lord, the living countenance  
Can better shew than ornamented walls.

*Hugo.* The walls, 'tis true, are dead and motionless.  
The living face can variably assume

The colouring of each transitory moment,  
Till, cold and still, it rests at last in death.

*Val.* May thine, my lord, then change its colour soon,  
For thou hast not received me as the father  
Of thy loved friend.

*Hugo. (Suddenly.)* Thou camest not in the manner  
Due to thyself. *(More calmly.)* Wherefore did'st thou  
tear up

Wounds that are *here (His hand on his breast.)* no less  
deep fix'd and painful  
Than in Elvira's heart?

*Val.* In truth, my lord,  
I could not think that either felt those wounds  
More deeply than a father.

*Hugo.* Thou hast proved  
That others are at least more irritable.  
What thou could'st bear to tell, we could not hear.

*(VALEROS looks on him scrutinizingly.)*

You are a father—and you weep the loss  
Of a loved son.—I LOST MYSELF IN HIM !  
Like an enchanter did that man divide me  
Into two separate existences ;—  
And as in life—so in his death he proved  
The source, at once, of happiness and woe.

*Val. (Doubling, and surprised.)* How ?

*Hugo.* Once upon a time a pious knight  
Through an enchanted forest rode, and there  
Forgot to cross himself. Then suddenly  
A Pagan fell upon him, who display'd  
A form, cuirass, and helmet, like his own.

They fought together, (while the evening closed)  
 Till, mutually, a furious encounter  
 Struck to the ground both visors, and with horror,  
 Each combatant, by supernatural light,  
 Saw his own features glaring out upon him  
 From his opponent's head-piece. And, thereafter,  
 When the light faded, the blind influences  
 Of darkness either champion impell'd  
 To hack and hew his enemy with wounds,  
 That his own limbs most painfully sustained.—  
*So*, since my wandering steps within the house  
 Of Carlos brought me, I have fall'n asunder  
 Into two separate beings, that support  
 A ceaseless warfare.

*Val.* Such discourse to me  
 Is most obscure ; and yet thou paint'st in riddles  
 A not unfit resemblance of what I  
 Myself experience in the alternate impulse  
 Now to join hearts with thee—and now to hate thee !

*Hugo.* So have I also felt towards thee.

*Val.* Which impulse  
 Then must I follow ?

*Hugo.* (*After a short silence, in a severe tone.*)  
 Hate me !

*Val.* This to avert,  
 Prove that thou hast not merited my hatred.

*Hugo.* (*Without looking up.*) Then love me !

*Val.* But if so, methinks, it follows,  
 I must abhor your wife.

*Hugo.* (*Startling.*) How so ?—What mean'st thou ?

*Val.* In truth, my Lord, I mean that one of you,  
I know not which, has been unjust to Carlos.

*Hugo.* Indeed !—Then fix the crime on me alone ;  
Because on me thou can'st avenge the wrong  
With sword in hand.

*Val.* All voices plead for *thee*  
That I have heard in Spain. All styled you there,  
THE FRIENDS.

*Hugo.* (*Much moved.*) Aye, so we were.—Take not, I pray,  
The words in ordinary acceptation.  
Our lives resembled, then, two mountain streams,  
That, *singly*, when they wind around the cliffs  
Can scarce a fisherman's light bark sustain ;  
But, when united, they rush nobly on,  
Both richer by that union, and admired  
By all around :—then lightly dance the waves,  
Triumphant, bearing loaded ships along.

*Val.* If this comparison is just, you were  
In truth most enviable. Where, and how,  
United were the streams ?

*Hugo.* Bereft of parents—by no brother aided—  
To none allied—I came to Talavera,  
The abode of many a noble family,  
Where courteously I was received. Don Carlos,  
Whose residence was there, until the king  
Appointed him an office at Tortosa,  
With hospitable kindness welcomed me :  
His house became like my paternal home ;  
Mysteriously it seem'd that the same rooms  
Which then I saw, had shelter'd me in childhood ;—

The same ancestral portraits frown'd upon me ;  
 And faces like to them, and his, and thine,  
 Had round my cradle stood. The home I sought  
 Was found at last ;—Carlos and I were one ;—  
 His son became my child — Elvira then  
 Was to me like a sister. (*With painful emotion.*)  
 Oh my Carlos !—

*Val. (Affected.)* Excellent man ? No—he who thus had  
 loved

Could not so fall !

*Hugo. (Startled.)* How ?—not ?—

*Val.* Let me not utter

That which even to have thought I am ashamed !  
 What you were to my son, be now to me—  
 A FRIEND !

*Hugo. (Fixing his eyes on him.)* To you ?—Aye—you  
 may venture it,—

You have no tempting wife.

*Val. (With horror, stepping back.)* My lord !—

*Hugo. (Suddenly, and in a deprest tone.)* Judge not !—  
 Thou art a man, composed of soul and body—  
 One day, may be Heaven's denizen ;—to-morrow,  
 The slave of hell ! (*Freely, and more quickly.*)

Go reckon with THE SUN,  
 That comes too near our foreheads in the south,  
 For the lost golden joys of Innocence—  
 That looks unguarded, and the impulse wild  
 Of heated blood for ever has destroy'd !—  
 (*After a pause.*) Now, dost thou know the knight of whom  
 I told,

That in the gloom of an enchanted wood  
 Contended with himself? Hast thou compassion  
 For him who loved his friend with heart sincere,  
 Yet loved his friend's wife more? Or sympathy  
 With anguish such as mine, when I embrace  
 The widow of Don Carlos, and behold  
 (So it appears to my distemper'd brain)  
 His angry spectre frowning still upon me?

*Val.* My lord, have I received full explanation?  
 Is this then ALL?

*Hugo. (Recollecting himself.)* Yes—all that I dare tell  
 Of the sad history.

*Val. (After a pause.)* Spirits blest, in heaven,  
 They only can be pure. I do lament  
 Thy sufferings, Count.—May Heaven in mercy judge  
 thee!—

*Hugo. (Half aside.)* Amen!—

*Val.* Your ladies come.

*Hugo. (Suddenly.)* Receive Elvira  
 As one who merits friendship.—*She* is guiltless.

## SCENE III.

VALEROS, HUGO, ELVIRA, BERTHA.

*Val. (To HUGO, after having saluted BERTHA in silence.)*  
 Your sister?—

*Hugo. (With a half-suppressed sigh.)* Yes—and no—

*Elv. (With vivacity.)* Yes!



*Ber.* No,—Sir Knight !

*Elv.* Nay—yes, indeed. A holy bond unites you,  
Not to be broken by my foolish passion.  
And you shall call him brother, though no ties  
Of blood require it.

*Ber.* As a sister still,  
(My brother's wife) I love you ; and forgive  
Your past suspicions.

*Val.* Noble ladies, teach me  
How to untwine this tangled mystery.—  
The Lady Bertha, styled of Oerindur,  
Must be Count Hugo's sister.

*Ber.* No.—He bears  
Our family name but by imperial favour.

*Hugo.* So is it, sir, in truth ; (to my misfortune !)  
Of mortal power, not Heaven, I was the gift  
To Bertha's parents.

*Val.* (*Anxious.*) How the gift ? you know  
Your own descent ?—

*Hugo.* No.

*Val.* (*To BERTHA, suddenly and anxiously.*) Was your  
mother, then,  
Of German birth ?

*Ber.* No.

*Elv.* Sir, you seem to take  
In this affair great interest.

*Val.* A resemblance—  
A story somewhat like—a vague suspicion  
Suggested by this picture. It is nothing.—

*Hugo.* It might perhaps—Pray share the tale with us.—

*Val.* Nay, 'tis impossible.—

*Hugo.* I beg you will.—

This landscape said you?—In this narrow vale  
Just at Barège, I chanced to lose all traces  
Of mine own origin, that with much care,  
So far I had pursued. What thus you hold  
Impossible, pray tell me, that I too  
May be convinced.

*Val.* (*Disturbed.*) Unwillingly would I  
Disclose a mother's crime against her offspring.

*Elvira.* Her name you may conceal.

*Val.* Well then—to set at rest  
Your doubts, I shall proceed.—A married lady,  
Nobly endow'd, (and yet confiding strangely  
In superstitions, taught her when a child)  
Lov'd to excess her first-born son.

*Hugo.* Was she  
Of Spain?

*Val.* Of race Castilian.

*Hugo.* Aye,—indeed?  
That answers well.

*Val.* It chanc'd that, in her arms,  
Bearing her favourite boy, and then expecting  
Ere long to have another child, one day  
In walking, she had met a gipsy woman,  
Near Talavera; one of those who live  
By telling fortunes, beggary or theft.—  
Laura, (this was the lady's name) refused  
The charity which was demanded rudely;—

H

Then the old hag scream'd out this prophecy :—  
 "Thou shalt have days of cruel pain before  
 Thy child is born ;—and if it proves a boy,  
 He murders him whom thou already hast ;—  
 Or if a girl, she too shall die through him ;—  
 And thou shalt perish, unabsolv'd, in sin."—

*Elv.* A fearful warning !—

*Val.* So, alas ! it seem'd

To Laura ; though in truth it was no more  
 Than disappointed mendicants are wont  
 To utter unregarded.—Of a boy  
 Was she deliver'd, after several days  
 Of pain and danger ; and the prophecy,  
 So far fulfill'd, now seem'd to her a voice  
 Of supernatural import.—When the child  
 Thus born,—(who at his godmother's request,—  
 A German countess,—had received the name  
 Of OTTO,) when he scarce could stand alone,—  
 Even then the mother trembled secretly  
 For her first favourite's safety. I was then  
 Abroad on duty. Laura with that Countess  
 Went to Barèges ; and in that crowded place,  
 One house contain'd them both. This German lady  
 Had then a son of equal age with Otto,  
 Who died just at the time his mother thought  
 Of thence departing for her distant home.  
 Then Laura, to avert the dread misfortune,  
 Still menaced by the gipsy's prophecy,  
 (Weak minds so far can superstition lead !)  
 Gave to the foreigner her child,—to be  
 For ever taken from her ; (and the distance

Render'd deception easy ;)—afterwards,  
 Even to her own last hour, she still affirm'd  
 To me that Otto perish'd.

*Ber. (Significantly.)* To you—Sir Knight——

*Val. (Recollecting himself.)* Ah ! you perceive how well  
 Valeros

Has learn'd to wander from the paths of truth.

THIS LADY WAS MY WIFE !—

*Hugo. (who has been listening with the greatest interest,  
 now starts violently.)*

Ha !—(*He turns away.*)

*Elv.* Is it possible ?—

Laura, the sainted mother of Don Carlos,  
 Could *she* do this ?—

*Val. (Tranquil.)* She did.

*Elv.* And therefore, too,  
 She chose the name of Otto for our son,—  
 That of this name she might at least possess  
 A grandchild ?

*Val.* So, methinks, 'tis probable.—  
 To visionary souls a name is much.  
 Who knows but *this new Otto* gave to her  
 New strength, even to her death from me to hide  
 That she unnaturally, on a stranger,  
 Bestow'd *another* ?—And that she no more  
 Might hear of him, or might repent her gift,  
 The letters of the child's adopted mother  
 Were still destroy'd unread,—till no more came.  
 So did I lose a son—my Charles a brother.

*Hugo. (Much agitated.)* Hold !—tell no more !—

*Ber.* Count, what has moved you thus ?

*Elv.* My lord !—what is it ?

*Hugo.* Ask not, for thou stand'st  
Verging upon an horrible abyss !

*Val.* ARE YOU AFRAID TO BE MY SON ?

*Hugo.* No, surely !  
It is not possible !—That foreign lady  
Who took the child—you knew her ?—

*Val.* Certainly.

*Hugo.* And have you sought for her in Germany ?

*Val.* I have ;—but she had died six years ago.—  
'Twas strange enough, that in this lady's house  
They knew not of the boy ; nor could remember  
That she had lived in Spain, or visited  
The Pyrenean baths. A picture too  
They pointed out as hers, had no resemblance.  
*Hugo.* (*With fixed staring eyes.*) If this wereso, indeed !—

*Val.* Then can it be ?

*Ber.* (*With vivacity.*) I know it can !—My mother, when  
in Spain,  
Bore (as the Count himself to-day inform'd me,)  
A surname borrowed from a German house.

*Val.* But with a friend like Laura, would she hold  
That secret undivulged for years ?—

*Ber.* She was  
A Protestant ; and to our northern throne  
(Styled in the south heretical) related.

*Val.* Ah !—then in truth it had been hazardous  
To bear her proper title when abroad.

*Ber.* Well !—And her letters when she had return'd,  
Laura, as you have told me, did not read.

*Val.* No.

*Ber.* (*With sudden joy.*) Then 'tis possible !—(*To Hugo.*)  
Know you, my lord,

What name the Countess Hannah borrow'd ?

*Hugo.* (*Struggling.*) No.

*Ber.* No ?—

*Val.* Then your mother's christian name was Hannah ?

*Ber.* It was. But whether she had changed it too,  
I know not.

*Val.* (*Moved.*) Heavens !—If it were so !—The name  
Of my wife's friend was Anna,—Countess—

*Hugo.* (*Interrupting him with the greatest emotion.*)  
No—no—no !—Tell not her name—for mercy !  
Only not now ! (*All look on him astonished.*)

Oh 'twould be horrible !

*Ber.* A name indeed would clear up nothing here,  
Because the Count knows not the borrow'd title  
My mother had assum'd.—But you shall here  
Behold a proof on which your eyes will judge.

(*She beckons Valeros to a side-door, opens it, and  
points within.*)

Come to this cabinet.—There !—You see before you  
My mother's picture.

*Val.* Oh ! Almighty Powers !—

It is the Countess Salm—the friend of Laura !—

*Hugo.* Oh, that the earth would rend ; or mountains fall .  
To cover me !—

*Elv.* Dear Hugo!—What is this?

For God's sake tell me!

*Val.* (*Rejoiced, and coming back suddenly with Bertha.*)

Ah! there is no doubt,—

Tis she! And, Oerindur! thy name is Otto!

THOU ART MY SON!

(*He wishes to embrace him. Hugo resists him with outstretched arm, and turns away his face.*)

*Ber.* My lord, compose yourself.

The whole affair is clear.

*Hugo.* (*In a hollow voice.*) Clear!—Aye, indeed,—

Clear as the lurid flames of yawning hell,

That now are laughing out into the night,

Rendering the footways visible whereby

The devil walks on earth!—

*Val.* Count Oerindur!

I stand perplex'd before thee—

*Elv.* Can'st thou not

Explain what moves thee thus?

*Hugo.* Oh, it would kill thee!

Such knowledge to contain, no mortal breast

Affords fit space.

*Ber.* Nay, speak—it must be told!

*Hugo.* By dreams and gipsy prophecies, to those

Who listen and believe, hell threatens danger.

Thereby the light of reason is obscured—

The senses all disorder'd;—deeds insane

Forthwith are done; and horrid guilt incur'd,

Even through the stratagems employed to shun it.

(*Solemnly.*) Mother ! before the judgment-seat, on thee  
Must fall a share of this foul crime !—

*Elv.* (*Suspecting.*) Oh Heaven !—

*Hugo.* Fly to its mercy !

*Val.* (*Also with suspicion.*) Otto !—

*Hugo.* CAIN, say rather !—

Cain, the accurs'd !—By *this* hand Carlos fell.

(*Valeros staggers, and falls into a chair. Bertha starts back with horror.*)

*Elv.* (*Who turns herself away ; her hands folded and turned upon her forehead,\* and cries out, thinking of her dream,*)

Tiger ! (*She faints.*)

*Ber.* (*Hastening to her.*) Oh God ! She dies !

*Hugo.* (*Approaching Valeros slowly, with compassion.*)

You sought a son,

Whom you had lost, ere he beheld his father.

Woe to the eyes that found him out at last,

And cannot weep !

*Val.* (*Raising himself up with difficulty.*) Curs'd be the  
day whose light

Thou first beheld'st—the womb that brought thee forth—

The breasts that fed thee—Monster ! whom the north

Rear'd up for murder, and the southern heat

Matured !— (*He sinks exhausted back into a chair.*)

*Ber.* (*Still busied with Elvira.*) Oh, had I not unveil'd  
this horror !

---

\* “ Gefaltet, und verwendet vor den stirn.”





Carlos incens'd against me for a fault  
That I had not committed, had my death  
Already plann'd. (*Pointing to Elvira*).

This lady sent to me

A secret warning.

*El.* Yet—Oh heaven!—'twas but  
My apprehension of approaching danger.—  
First passion only—

*Hugo.* No ; I follow'd him  
His anger to conciliate. With derision  
He then invited me to celebrate,  
Ere long, his wedding anniversary  
With mirth and feasting.—Know'st thou jealousy ?—  
It's fire had driven me forth into the wood ;—  
And at a tree, beside his foaming horse,  
I saw him stand ;—and near him lay the game  
That he had captur'd, struggling yet in death.—  
The murderous weapon there was in my hand ;—  
His life depended on me ;—I had but  
To move a finger,—to obtain Elvira.—  
(*With a faltering voice*). Mark you,—now flash'd the  
carabine—the ball  
Flew from the tube—a cry struck on mine ear.—  
(*He stops exhausted.*)

*Ber.* (*With mingled horror and compassion.*)  
Oh, hell has fearful power !—From the vibration  
Even of one fibre, future happiness  
Or horror may arise !  
(*Weeping.*) Oh, speak to him !—  
Wife !—father ! speak forgiveness to the fallen !—

*Elv. (Affected, but without looking at Hugo.)*

In the true church's bosom may the sinner  
His purity regain.—To that resource  
Betake thyself!

*Val. (Roused by this thought.)* Aye, go from hence, my  
son,

And kneeling on the altar's sacred floor  
At Rome, obtain beneath St Peter's dome,  
From consecrated hands, your absolution!

*Ber. (Earnestly,—in a half-whisper to Hugo.)*  
Hugo! thou art a Protestant!—

*Val. (With painful emotion turning away.)*  
Oh, heaven!

*Ber.* Hold firmly thy belief.—Apostacy  
Of heaven's own absolution might deprive thee.

*Hugo.* I am a christian and a man. Too well  
I know that words alone may not efface  
The stain of fratricide. *(Disturbed and earnestly.)*

But to the sinner  
Remains another dome; a prouder vault  
Than aught that Rome can boast! And this to all  
Who trust in God, whatever be their creed,  
Is open. Proudly arch'd, and sapphire blue,  
Rises this vault magnificent on high!—  
And there, even at the dark hour, you behold  
Pictures, with sparkling diamonds surrounded.  
Five of those look down on me, and present  
Of my own life the portraiture; for there  
I find a BULL; two BROTHERS, and a WOMAN,  
(Sovereign in charms) an ARCHER and a SCORPION

In morning's early beams, those symbols fade,  
 And in a wide arèa there is risen  
 An altar for a sacrifice. Then come  
 The pious crowd, assembling to behold  
 (While solemn dirges sound) the victim wait  
 His final doom. (*He pauses for a moment.*)

Know'st thou this altar? Fools

Name it a SCAFFOLD!

(*All are visibly startled. He concludes firmly and rapidly.*)

*There, and only there,*

A blessing can be gain'd. The axe alone  
 Can reconcile me with myself—or Heaven!

(*Exit suddenly.*)

*Elv. (Hastening after him.)* Hugo!—

*Val. (Follows her.)* Otto!—

*Ber. (Follows more slowly.)* Oerindur!—

*Val. (Having reached the door.)* Wilt thou

Disgrace my name? (*Exit.*)

*Ber (Coming slowly again forward, with tears in her eyes.)* Unhappy man, thy fate

A miracle alone could meliorate!

(*Resolutely.*) But—so thou darest not end thy misery!

(*Exit during the fall of the drop scene.*)

## ACT FOURTH.

*The Gothic Hall exactly as it appeared at the beginning of the first act, with the harp and the clock, of which the hand is seen pointing to eleven.*

## SCENE I.

**BERTHA** *writing.* **KOLBERT** *stands waiting in the Hall.*  
*Candles burning. A deep stillness, and the clock strikes eleven.*

*Ber. (Continuing to write.)* Is the Count gone to rest ?

*Kol.* Not yet, my lady.

But my lord has not left his room again.

*Ber.* You were with him ?

*Kol.* I was.

*Ber.* Has he conversed

With you ?

*Kol.* No ;—rather with himself he spoke ;—

Or, if I dare to say so, with a picture

To me unknown.

*Ber. (Apparently indifferent.)* Good Kolbert !—be not  
troubled

As to the import of the Count's discourse—

He is not well.

*Kol.* So must I think.

*Ber.* His fainting

Has left him much disorder'd—and, besides——

*(She pauses, and looks at Kolbert.)*

Kolbert, you are a tried and faithful servant ;—

To you I may confide that he believes

Himself the cause of a dear friend's decease,

Whose picture you have seen.

*Kol. (More cheerfully.)* So I suspected—

Or something like to this, for——

*Ber. (Interrupting him.)* So must all

That you observe be construed. But for this,

Are servants unadvised of his distemper,

Till he is calm, unfit to wait upon him.—

You understand me?—

*Kol.* No one but myself

Comes near him.

*Ber. (Folding her letter.)* Right ;—and now, go see that  
quickly

A sledge is got in readiness.

*Kol.* I shall.

*Ber.* And tell the secretary his commission

Awaits him in my chamber ; and that he

Must come prepared to set out instantly

For the metropolis.—Go tell him this. *(Exit Kolbert.)*

## SCENE II.

BERTHA. (*Alone. She has finished the superscription, and looks at her letter.*)

*Ber.* To rescue him from powers that out of evil  
New evil breed—Oh, might the weak prevail !—  
All gracious Heaven ! might Bertha here below  
Be Hugo's angel !

## SCENE III.

BERTHA. ELVIRA. (*In a veil, with her cross and rosary.*)

*Ber.* How !—in such a dress  
At this late hour ?—And have you been alone  
In the cold night-air at the chapel ?

*Elv.* Aye.—

Beneath the cross for a long space I lay  
Prostrate in vain.—Here is not my religion !—  
No consecrated servant of the church  
Here frees the suffering soul from bonds of sin !

*Ber.* Nay, God is ever present.

*Elv.* (*With visionary emotion.*) Thou art pure  
Before him as the fresh new-drifted snow.  
Thy home is Heaven ; and beams of light divine  
Rest on thine aspect.

*(She throws herself down before Bertha, with the looks of supplication.)*

Virgin ! at thy feet

Let me repent my secret guilt. Hear thou  
My full confession !—

*Ber.* Countess !—Heaven !—She raves.—

Rise up !—Thy husband's actions are not thine !

*Elv.* They are ! they are ! because I knew them !

*Ber.* (*Astonished.*) How ?

*Elv.* I could not shun the knowledge of his crime  
After its perpetration. Sinful love  
O'erpower'd my senses, and with wilful blindness  
I gave myself up to the murderer.  
The apprehensions that had found no space  
For entrance in a heart o'ercharged with sin,  
Fell on me in a dream.

*Ber.* Thou art ingenious  
In self-tormenting.—So may righteous Heaven,  
As thou condemn'st thyself, not judge of thee !—

*Elv.* I had inflam'd him for this murderous deed !—  
Therefore my guilt is *more* than *his*.—Besides—  
(*Struggling with herself.*) Carlos was sickly—Hugo  
hoped—and I—

*(Bertha looks at her with the pride of innocence, and  
is about to go.)*

Thou goest—Oh Bertha, stay ! devote not thus  
A miserable woman to despair—

*Ber.* Nay—Countess—let me go—ere I believe  
That thou indeed art worthy of thy fate !—



*Elv.* No—sure as Heaven has never closed its gates  
To the repentant sinner—thou wilt not  
Refuse me thy compassion.—

Carlos' father—

*(She pauses.)* Reluctant I accuse him—though he bears  
A share of blame.—I was of princely blood—  
But early left an orphan.—Don Valeros,  
Of birth Castilian—and polite address,  
For Carlos sued ;—thus even in infancy  
Was I betroth'd ; and in three years thereafter  
Was married ; while in soul and heart we were  
Yet children both. I was a wife—a mother—  
Still ignorant of love. But Hugo came,—  
The veil was rent—and love appear'd at last—  
Yet the sweet influence of a new-born passion  
Duty controul'd. Oh, how have I not struggled !  
How oft in fervent prayer have I embraced  
The Virgin's knees ;— but she refused her aid ;  
For I too late had sought her.

*(She takes Bertha, who has been drawing near with  
increasing interest, by the hand.)*

Bertha ! Thou

Hast loved him too ;—thou know'st, in woman's breast,  
He murders peace

*Ber. (With dignity, which melts into compassion.)*

I know not that,—but still,  
Unhappy sister ! I can feel thy pain !—  
How wilt thou bear to part with him !—

*Elv.* Oh, heavens !

*Ber.* Thou art alarm'd ?

*Elv.* (*With self-possession.*) The bleeding heart must  
yield

To conscience,—for his crime has broke all ties—  
No more shall I behold him !—

*Ber.* Thus I hope  
He may be saved !—

*Elv.* (*Anxiously.*) How ?—saved ! Oh, heavenly powers !  
Then is there danger ?—

*Ber.* Canst thou ask ?—Could he  
Survive, if with himself unreconcil'd ?

*Elv.* Oh ! how can such a deed be reconcil'd ?—

*Ber.* Deeds can exalt as much as they degrade ;  
And he must enter on some path of glory,—  
And raise himself by his own proud exploits,  
The higher from this fall.

*Elv.* (*Anxiously.*) What dost thou mean ?—

*Ber.* A powerful foe, protected by the sea,  
Now in the eastern coast usurps possession  
Of the king's distant territories.—Here  
A fleet lies ready ; and there needs no more  
But a commander of sufficient power  
To quell and punish these marauders. Now  
Must Hugo on the field of battle gain—

*Elv.* (*Interrupting her.*) Ah ! how can he ?—

*Ber.* Has he not to the king,  
When with my father on the field, already  
His valour prov'd ? See ! (*Showing the letter.*)

To the duke my uncle,  
This letter goes to-day, that he may beg  
The chief command for Hugo.—

*Elv.* But does he  
Himself approve ?

*Ber.* He must.—Is it not death  
That he desires ?—well—*there* he best can find it.—

*Elv.* (*Terrified.*) Oh, gracious heaven !—No—from  
my side he dare not——

*Ber.* How ?—Thou wilt see him never more—and yet  
He shall not part—— ?

*Elv.* See him no more !—alas !  
If thus I spoke, I was bereft of reason.  
But that my *will* and *duty* are at variance  
Is my chief source of torment.

Cruel woman !—

Because he cannot wholly be thine own,  
Thou doom'st him to destruction !—

*Ber.* (*With dignity.*) To destruction !—  
The polar star that guides the mariner,  
Dies only with the world. He whom I love,  
Dies but with me. Still cherish'd in my soul,  
As in the artist's gifted mind exists  
The beautiful IDEAL ! He partakes not  
The fate of perishable mortal frames  
That are desir'd—possess'd—and turn'd to dust.—  
Only the stains, that on the picture still  
Are visible, disturb imagination.—  
Therefore let Hugo go, and with the sword

Defend his country ! So even in his death  
Methinks a purer life he shall acquire !

*Elv. (With increasing vehemence.)* Ay—thus, proud  
woman ! even on earth below,  
Thou can'st belong to heaven, and contemplate  
The soul abstract from its corporeal frame,—  
Renown from life. I cannot !—What I love  
Seems indivisible. When I embrace  
My husband, he is all the world to me,—  
And Bertha shall not rob me of mine empire.

*Ber.* Let him decide. I hear him now approaching.

*Elv. (Anxiously.)* Is he, indeed ?—

*Ber.* He comes.

*Elv.* Then must I fly.

*Ber.* Fly !—Thou wilt not allow him to depart,  
Yet will not see him.

*Elv. (Vehemently.)* Here, in such a dress,  
And before witnesses, it may not be.  
Cold, heartless judge ! I will not bend before thee.

*(She hastens towards a door in the back scene. Hugo  
enters at another. She shrieks at his appearance.)*

Ha ! *(She hastens into a side chamber.)*

*Ber.* Stay—I will retire.

*Elv.* No—'tis impossible.

*(Exit.)*

## SCENE IV.

BERTHA. *Hugo, pale and disordered.*

*Hugo.* Nay, let her go !—'Tis fit that all the living  
Should fly the murderer !—

*(As BERTHA is about to follow her, he says, imperiously,)*

Let her go, I say !—

I shall not lose my wife ! From hell obtain'd  
By fratricide, such contracts will the devil  
Not fail to uphold !—

*Ber.* Oh, Heaven, how had'st thou power  
A deed like this to perpetrate ?

*Hugo.* The power ?—

Man of himself does nothing. He is ruled  
In all his actions by a secret influence,  
That he may not resist. A deed !—Can'st thou  
Call *that* a deed ? Oh, let it rest, I pray you !—  
What was it all in truth but this ? My mother  
Chanced to refuse a rial to a beggar !

*Ber.* May God forgive her errors !

*Hugo.* Had thy mother

Not told the secret, I had not been lost !—  
'Twas this that drove me from the peaceful north  
Into the burning clime where love is rage,  
And heated blood to murder instigates.

(*Half aside.*) Crimes whilst they but exist in thought,  
 are nothing ;  
 And when in silent darkness perpetrated,  
 They still are nothing while the heart and lips  
 Can guard the secret.

(*To BERTHA, with more vivacity.*) Mark you !—these  
 are snares

That hell employs. Because man has the power  
 In sinful thoughts to revel uncontroll'd,  
 The devil draws him on to realize them ;  
 Believing in the breast's obscurity  
 To veil his actions, as he veil'd his thoughts. —  
 Then patiently must be endur'd the load  
 On thine own shoulders by thyself imposed.  
 But weaker grow thy steps ; and heavier still,  
 At every step, thy burden ; till at last  
 The bearer's limbs are broken, and he falls,  
 And tears with him, to the profound abyss,  
 Wife !—father ! (*He groans deeply.*) Oh !

*Ber.* (*Agitated, and half aside.*) Alas ! this is beyond  
 The power of the physician !

*Hugo.* The physician !—  
 Disease like this admits no remedy !  
 Man may commit to memory what he will—  
 The works of Moses and the Prophets, all  
 The sacred books ;—but from the mind to blot  
 Even but one letter of the characters  
 By conscious guilt engraven—This he cannot ;  
 And no physician can the memory clear  
 From such foul stains.

*Ber.* Nay—but the sick man still,  
If he has fortitude and energy,  
May find himself a cure. Read this.

*Hugo.* (*Takes the letter.*) What is it ?

(*He sits down and reads, watched by Bertha ;—his  
gloomy countenance becomes lively, his eyes fiery,  
he stretches out his arm, at last starts up.*)

Ha ! gentle Dove ! Where hast thou learn'd so well  
What fits the ravenous vulture ?

This indeed

Affords the cure. I thank thee, mild physician !  
Who heal'st with fire and sword !

(*With inflamed looks.*) BLOOD WILL HAVE BLOOD !

*Ber.* (*Agitated, and turning from him.*) Oh, Heaven !

*Hugo.* A man,—were it a brother—murder'd—  
Shot by a coward and insidious aim,—'tis nothing !  
Too much indeed for conscience, but too little  
To satisfy the cravings of an Hell,  
Whose flames are thereby nurtured.

(*With increasing effect.*) With mankind

I will have bloody reckoning, even for *this*,  
That I was born a man, and like to man  
From innocence have fall'n.

No longer now

On single victims, but on MULTITUDES  
My arm will bring destruction. I will sow  
The bloody fields with mangled carcases.  
Towns fortified the firebrand will assail,  
And though the pious should implore for mercy,  
Devote their peaceful homes to raging flames,

That crackling flash on high, and fill the streets  
With heat and horror. O'er the piled-up dead  
Is the last rampart storm'd! The gates are shatter'd!  
The troops, to madness rous'd up by the blood  
Of their fall'n comrades, rush with shouts of triumph  
Amid the lamentations; merciless,  
With female blood pollute the sacred altar;  
Or, by the white hair, tender children drag  
And overwhelm them in the flames.

(*More slowly.*) Then when the day  
Of glory is concluded, and the victor  
Binds up his tigers;—when the cries of death  
Have pass'd away, and night's obscurity  
Conceals the ruin'd town, then lamps are kindled,  
And from the half-burnt churches thou shalt hear  
“Te Deum!” wailing forth.

*Ber. (Shuddering.)* Oh, horrible!—  
I had no thoughts like these. I wish'd thee rather  
(Humanely risking thine own life) to rescue  
Thy countrymen from hostile chains. The laurel  
Might thus adorn thy temples, and conceal  
The fratricidal brand upon thy brow.

*Hugo.* Well then!—my disposition is not evil—  
Those frightful images were but the game  
Of fantasy. I know what thou intend'st—  
That I should die, and bury far from home  
My foul disgrace and misery.

*Ber. (Leaning on him, and weeping.)* Oh, my brother!

*Hugo. (Moved.)* See now—thou weep'st—  
Think'st thou I fear to die?—



DEATH HAS FAR LESS OF TERROR THAN REPENTANCE !—  
The dead perchance are happy.

*Ber.* Nay, stay here !

Live, Hugo, for thy wife ; and for the boy  
Who has no father ;—for the father too,  
That else would have no son. Yet be a man,  
And summon energies for some high deed,  
That may once more give courage to Elvira,  
To fly with love renew'd into thine arms.—  
And to the knight new power o'er his affliction  
To triumph, and with pride to greet at last,  
A long-lost son !—

*Hugo.* Well—well—This all may be,—  
When I have absent been a little while.—  
They are proud Spaniards. In Elvira's veins  
Flows princely blood. Castilian hearts are fix'd  
On stars and garters: *One* I have bereft  
Of a lov'd son ; the other of a husband—  
But I shall be the man to make amends  
To both, when on my head a crown is gleaming !—

*Ber. (Astonished.)* What dost thou mean ?—

*Hugo.* It shall—by Heaven it shall !—  
Dispatch that letter. The lost provinces  
Shall be re-captured ;—but not for the king :—  
They shall belong unto the conqueror.—  
I will exalt the injur'd exil'd son  
High on the throne of power ;—will sow with diamonds  
Elvira's rich dark tresses ; till, like stars,  
They dazzle every eye.—I will adorn  
Her temples with the regal coronet ;

Her graceful form with gold-embroider'd purple ;  
Then to my heart the lovely woman press,  
And die of pleasure—Haste !—It shall be done.—

*Ber.* Ay, true, indeed ! Hell will not let escape  
Whom it has once o'ercome. Even as the needle,  
Touch'd by the magnet, ever seeks the north,  
So he that once by guilt has been defiled,  
Turns evermore to evil.

*Hugo.* What hast thou  
So wicked found in my designs ?

*Ber.* (*Sternly.*) High treason !  
Treachery and devastation !—Woe to thee !  
The influence of a father's curse is on thee !—

*Hugo.* (*After a short pause.*) Ay—thou art in the right ;  
I am indeed  
A villain !—

*Ber.* Hugo, be composed !—The secret  
So suddenly disclosed, has, like a flash  
Of lightning, stunn'd thee. What, in such a trance,  
Thou dream'dst of evil, thou wouldst not fulfill,  
If once awoke !—

*Hugo.* Indeed ?—yet in thy breast  
The thought first rose—therefore it must be good.

*Ber.* It was at least intended well. But yet  
An inexperienced maid may strive in vain  
To look into the heart of man.

*Hugo.* Not so.—  
Thou hast decided well. The die is cast.  
I must go hence—no matter where—that so

My destiny may have more free dominion.  
 Dispatch that letter to the Duke ; but add  
 A verbal notice, that without delay  
 I shall myself succeed the messenger.  
 Who carries it ?—

*Ber.* I have already summon'd  
 The secretary.

*Hugo.* I will speak with him.—  
 Although the marshall's baton were refused me,  
 I would go forth into the field of danger  
 Even as a private horseman.

*(He goes with Bertha towards the door ; at this  
 moment, the clock, pointing between eleven and  
 twelve, rings two quarters. Hugo looks up at  
 it, and at once losing courage, steps back again.)*

Ha !

*Ber.* What mean you ?—

*Hugo.* See'st thou not that the midnight hour is yet  
 To come ?—Ere the cursed day is *wholly* past,  
 I can do nothing—nothing even resolve.  
 To-day is govern'd by mine evil star !—

*Ber.* What—dost thou rave ?—

*Hugo.* (*Painfully.*) No—no ! Have I not told thee  
 My life is pictured in the Zodiack ?—  
 The BULL,—the BROTHERS,—WOMAN,—ARCHER,—  
 SCORPION !—

Mark !—I have calculated ; and I know  
 Full well how stood the sun, and mine own planet,  
 When first I saw Don Carlos ;— when his life  
 I rescued at the Andalusian bull-fight ;

When his wife's charms first won my heart,—and when—

*(He pauses.)*

There was no chance nor choice in this. By nature  
I am not wicked ; truly not !—But Fate  
Led me resistless on through paths of sin  
And danger. They are fools, who seek the stars  
For that which *is to come*. So far our knowledge  
May not extend. Yet by astrology  
We may refresh our memory, and *beware*,  
When the stars are again as they have been  
In evil hours before.

*Ber.* Oh fearful power  
Of conscience ! Reason, too, dost thou invade ?—

*Hugo.* If this were nothing, wherefore so precise  
The number FIVE ?—That first mysterious union  
Of equal and unequal—good and evil—  
A symbol of the human soul ? To-day,  
As formerly, the sun is right against them.  
*This* you must grant me——

*Ber.* *(With a mournful compassionate smile.)* Be it so—  
To-morrow,  
More than to-day, thou wilt believe that *action*,  
Not dreaming, is thy duty. I prepare  
For thy departure.

## SCENE V.

*Hugo alone,—after a long silence.*

*Hugo.* Were she in the right,  
Beyond the stars is nothing *pre-determin'd*.—  
Man has free choice of actions here below,  
And must account for them above. But this  
Would lead to direful consequence. No good  
Can come of it. This life is so contracted,  
And so—so long that other !—If we knew  
That other state—who knows ?—haply it were  
Not quite so terrible. Perchance no more  
Than earth presents—anger and punishment,  
And then forgiveness.—Only the dark veil  
That shadows it,—*this* overpowers our senses,  
And turns into an hell of ceaseless pain  
The present and the future ;—and we feel  
An impulse, even from terror of the darkness,  
To plunge at once into its awful bosom ;  
For oftentimes 'tis nothing to encounter  
What thought and fancy render'd horrible !—  
If it were NOTHING !—Oh, but this word only  
Is frightful unto men !—ETERNITY  
Raises the sinner's hair on end.—And NOTHING !—  
Who can explain it ?

## SCENE VI.

HUGO, VALEROS. *His sword at his side, and carrying another cautiously concealed under his cloak.*

Val. *(Yet in the back-ground, and in a deep protracted tone.)* OTTO!

Hugo. *(Who starts violently, and his knees tremble as he turns towards the door.)* Oh, is it you?

Val. *(Coming forward.)* Wherefore are you thus trembling?

Hugo. Your voice! It seem'd almost that Carlos called.

Val. *(Half aside.)* Indeed!—Who knows?—

Hugo. *(Disquieted.)* Then will you not retire  
To rest?—But you are arm'd!—And wherefore thus,  
At such an hour?

Val. To arms a Spaniard still  
Resorts whene'er his name has been disgrac'd.

Hugo. Be quiet—I know all.

Val. What?

Hugo. For thy sake,  
And Bertha's, and Elvira's, I must forfeit  
That last resource of ordinary sinners—  
Before the people to kneel down and gain  
The church's absolution. Yet the curse—  
So Bertha told me—the dark influence  
Of that paternal curse still hovers o'er me,

And drives me restless on to wickedness—  
 Could you not break the fearful spell ?

*Val. (Unimpassioned, but firmly.)* REVENGE  
 Dissolves it. Therefore, as you see me here,  
 Arm'd I have sought you.

*Hugo. (Stepping back.)* What ? You would that I——

*Val. (Throwing from a short distance the sword that he  
 carried under his cloak, without violence, at Hugo's  
 feet.)*

As it may happen !—I would have you fight !

*Hugo. That God forbid !—Against a father ?*

*Val. Aye—*

The father of thy victim !

*Hugo. With a man*

In years ?

*Val. This is no knightly tournament.*

Not *strength* but *skill* these weapons will require.

*Hugo. (Anxiously.)* Can you not think ?—

*Val. I have resolved. The secret*  
 Is known to women—therefore will transpire ;  
 And Carlos unrevenged may not remain.  
 The stain of fratricide, in such a house  
 As mine, by Heaven ! blood only can efface.  
 Nay, more—this is the ANNIVERSARY !  
 He fell to-day ; and therefore now shall fall  
 The murderer of my Charles or I !

*Hugo. (Shuddering.)* Alas !—\*  
 Could'st thou but read my soul ?

---

\* A slight deviation here, for which (with many other) the translator has to apologize.

*Val.* Well may the combat  
To thee seem horrible ;—but as a debt  
Thou ow'st it unto me. Now Love and Hate,  
Nature and Duty, all contending, tear  
Thy father's heart ; and by the sword alone  
Peace can be found.—So draw, and guard thyself !

*Hugo.* Oh, never. Momentary impulse rules  
Our actions. It might be, that when the sword  
Approach'd my heart, the love of life might seize me,  
And I might kill thee !

*Val.* Well—so much the better !

*Hugo.* And if the father o'er the son prevail'd,  
Then would thy life be forfeit to the laws  
That in this kingdom strongly——

*Val.* (*Interrupting him, and proudly.*)  
Who has taught thee  
To draw such false conclusions ?—Don Valeros  
Owns upon earth one king alone, who rules  
Two southern worlds. Here in the foreign north  
No laws can us controul.—If thou shouldst fall,  
Then by the proper chieftain of thy house,  
Has God decreed thy punishment. Come on !—

*Hugo.* Oh, kill me rather !—

*Val.* (*Significantly.*) Like a coward ?—No—  
That is no trade of mine !—

*Hugo.* (*Feeling the rebuke.*) Trade ?—(*Then with a mixture of supplication and warning.*) Father !

*Val.* Come on, I say ! we may be interrupted.—  
Wilt thou not fight ?—



*Hugo. (Depressed.)* No!—

*Val.* How?—Thou bear'st the name

Of two heroic lines, and art a coward?—

*Hugo. (Forgetting himself.)* Who dared to say so?—

*Val.* Coward and assassin!—

*Hugo. (Enraged, takes up the sword.)* Death and hell!—

*Val. (Stations himself, and draws his sword.)*

At last!—Thou roused up Tiger,

Unsheath thy sword! Fall on—have at my heart!—

*Hugo. (After a short pause of recollection.)*

No!—curs'd for ever be this hand, if now

It bares the steel!—

*(He breaks the sword, still in the scabbard, close over*

*• by the handle—and throws both pieces behind him.)*

Go—and may rust devour thee!—

*Val. (Struggling with unconquerable rage.)*

Ha!—caitiff! if thou dar'st not risque the combat,

Then die at once!—

*(He suddenly takes his sword, and turns it in his hand like a dagger.)*

We cannot both survive!—

*(He hastens to Hugo to stab him. Hugo steps back.*

*Elvira, who has already entered, runs up to him.)*

## SCENE VII.

HUGO, VALEROS, ELVIRA, (*Without her veil.*)

*Elv.* (*Having interrupted Valeros, on whose left hand  
Hugo is stationed, presses him back, and draws,  
stepping before Hugo, a dagger from her girdle.*)

Madman ! and wouldst thou kill a man defenceless ?—

Here !—I will meet thee, for *my* hand is guarded.—

Since I loved Hugo, I bore *this* to punish

The daring foe that would attempt to part us !—

*Hugo.* (*Who, during Elvira's speech, has kept his eyes  
firmly fixed on the lifted dagger.*)

Oh, give me peace !—But truly ye are both

In such things ignorant. Could ye believe,

That with that blade, though sharp, could be fulfill'd

Such purpose ? That your hands would not have trem-  
bled,

Pressing the steel into another's heart ?—

Back through your arms would rush the sense of pain ;—

And pale with fear ye would resign the work

But half-accomplish'd.—If to deeds like these

Inclin'd, ye must be ARCHERS ; \*—far remov'd

By distance from your object, but in power

Terrifically near.—Ye come in anger—

Take aim with agitation ;—tempted still

---

\* “ Müsst ihr schützen seyn.”

To vain endeavours at th' accomplishment  
 Of that whose possibility depends  
 On Fate alone. If it were *sure* indeed,  
 Ye would renounce the crime. But then the devil  
 Hisses into thine ear his instigations—  
 “If thou could'st hit the mark?” and finally  
 Twitches thy fingers with convulsive motion,—  
 And so—thy distant victim is laid low!—  
 Oh, hell has fearful stratagems and cunning!—

*Elo. (Having drawn back, and replaced the dagger in her girdle.)*

Ah!—What would I have done!

*Val. (Aside, and sheathing his sword.)* How did the  
 power

Of momentary impulse lead me on!—

*Hugo. (Elevated, yet not proudly.)* Mark you, such are  
 mankind!—and if *one* falls

In guilt o'erwhelm'd, another o'er his fate  
 May weep, but never dare to be his judge,  
 Nor executioner.

*Val.* By Heaven! thy lesson  
 Falls on a deeply agitated heart.

*(Coming nearer to Hugo.)*

My son, I do recall the reckless curse  
 That I pronounced. Or if indeed 'tis true,  
 That with the powers of darkness, like an oath,  
 A father's curse is held irrevocable,  
 Then on mine own head let it fall; and so  
 Revenge will have her victim.

*Elo. (In great emotion.)* No!—on me—  
 On me alone the stroke!

*(Kneeling.)*

This mortal frame,  
That with ill-fated charms provoked the crime,  
I cast at the avenger's feet. Oh, Heaven,  
Send forth thy flames the victim to destroy!—  
Save but my soul!

*Hugo. (Earnestly and quietly, yet with a voice more elevated than before.)* Oh, let that rest!—Methinks,  
Dissolved already is the curse;—I breathe  
More freely; and mine inward eyes behold  
That ONLY PATH THAT LEADS TO PEACE!

*Elv. (Struck by what he has said.)* Ah, me!

*(On turning round, the harp attracts her eyes. She  
throws herself down, reclining upon it, and ap-  
pears to take no interest in what follows.)*

*Val.* The only path to bliss lies through the Church!  
Son! from her sacred hands oh let a father  
Receive thee to his heart again!—Wilt thou  
Not follow me to Spain?—

*Hugo. (In a waking dream.)* I shall.

*Val. (Rejoiced.)* Thou wilt?—

*Hugo.* My spirit is already there. The body  
Thou can'st lead after it.

*Val.* The resolution  
Came from on high. Delay not to fulfil it!—

*Hugo.* Oh, surely not!—

*Val.* By this means, to Elvira  
Thou wilt bring peace.

*Hugo. (With unquiet endeavours to remove Valeros.)*  
I think so!—But to Bertha  
The separation will be painful. Thou  
Wilt now prepare her for it.

*Val.* Now ?—

*Hugo.* Not yet

Has she retired to sleep. We had agreed  
This night to send a messenger post haste,  
Unto the Duke her uncle,—who at court  
Has powerful influence. She proposed that I  
Should from the king obtain the chief command  
Against a daring enemy, that now  
Plunders the eastern coast.—But this is past !—

*Val.* No—No !—By Heaven, the son of Don Valeros  
Shall never serve a foreign prince. But still,  
That thou, by such agreement hast approv'd  
Thyself deserving of an hero's name,  
Has in my heart extinguish'd every spark  
Of lingering hate !—Come to mine arms !—

*Hugo.* (*Falls on him deeply moved.*) My father !—  
Oh, Heaven ! Can'st thou embrace me ?—

*Val.* Otto !—dear—

And only son !—all—all is now forgiven !—

*Hugo.* (*After slowly raising himself up ;—his eyes still  
fixed with tenderness on Valeros.*)

But go to Bertha !—Tell her this—and then  
Retire to rest ;—and wake again—with courage !—

*Val.* Oh ! joy methinks to me will compensate  
The loss of sleep. (*Exit,*

## SCENE VIII.

ELVIRA, HUGO.

*Elv. (Who after a short pause, lays her harp aside, comes opposite to Hugo, and tries to catch his eye.)*

Hugo !—

*Hugo. (Moved.)* Poor victim !—

Follow his kind example, and forgive me !—

*Elv. (Falling on his neck.)* My dear—dear Hugo !—

*Hugo.* Dearest wife !—

*Elv. (After a pause, with deep suffering.)*

Then, must

It be ?

*Hugo. (Confused at having betrayed himself.)*

What mean you ?—

*Elv.* What the harp,—

The *broken string* prophetically told me,

To-night amid the twilight's reign obscure,—

And what methinks, even now, thou hast *resolv'd*.

*Hugo. (Lost in recollection ; his look fixed on the instrument.)*

The harp to me is sacred ;—though no skill

Have I to wake its music.—When at evening,

It rested in thine arms ; and on thy lap

My head was laid, with cheeks that like the rose

From the blood's agitation glow'd ; and when

An heavenly strain drawn from the heart no less

Than from the strings arose, how vanish'd all  
 My fierce desires, and sinful pleasure then  
 Dissolv'd in tears! Beneath the soothing charm  
 Of thy sweet music, peace and calmness gain'd  
 Once more their empire. Carlos was my brother;  
 Thou my lov'd sister! *(Pointing to the harp.*

*There dwelled Hugo's angel,*  
 Till Hugo sinn'd too deeply. The same power  
 Has now foretold, to thy awakened senses  
 Of strife and suffering, the approaching end.  
*Elv.* Oh, Hugo! from thy wife can'st thou not turn  
 This blow?

*Hugo.* Thou feel'st I cannot.—Life resembles  
 The trembling of a sound; and man himself  
 Is like an harp. When to the ground thus fall'n,  
 It yields no more its proper music. Discord  
 Mars the sweet songs, that o'er the perfect chords  
 Divinely float.—The deed that I have done  
 Infects with madness all that are around me.  
 There wanted but an hair-breadth, even now,  
 To the repeating of my bloody deed!  
 Where lives a murderer—*there* may none resist  
 The power of hell!

*Elv.* *(Turning away.)* Woe! woe!—Thou speak'st aloud  
 What like a mist around me lay.

*Hugo.* The wrath  
 Of Carlos fills my house. Therefore, to-day  
 Must I depart, his spirit to appease.

*Elv.* Oh God ! so soon ?

*Hugo.* The soul lifts up her wings  
Boldly within me, to escape from bondage.—  
Out of this curs'd abode, where life is horror,  
It will away unto the realms of light,  
Wherein the chains of hell may be dissolved,  
And pardon granted to repentance.

*(Elvira turns herself with a glance at the clock ; and  
prepares suddenly to go out.)*

Wherefore

Would'st thou desert me ?

*Elv.* (*Deeply moved.*) But to see once more  
And kiss my child !—

*Hugo.* Do that—and then farewell !

*Elv.* Not so—not yet—stay here—I come again  
Before the clock will strike.

*Hugo.* What mean'st thou ?

*Elv.* Nothing.

*(She goes as far as the door, where she meets her son.)*

#### SCENE IX.

HUGO, ELVIRA, OTTO.

*Elv.* But he is here. (*To OTTO.*) I thought thou wert  
asleep.

*Otto.* I was ; but evil dreams disturb'd my rest ;—  
Evil in their beginning, but at last,  
So grand !—Methought, Lord Hugo ! thou appear'dst



As I have never seen thee, since the death  
Of my lov'd father—cheerful as the morn  
In Spain arises ; and *so far* the dream  
Seems true. Thou look'st far better than I left thee !

*Hugo.* Indeed, my child ! Hast thou discover'd *that* ?

*Otto.* I have. But in my mother is the dream  
Not yet fulfill'd. Even as above our altar,  
The Holy Virgin crown'd with glory shines,  
So beautiful I saw thee in my dream !  
But now, thy countenance, though not less fair,  
Is not so gay nor smiling !

*Hugo.* But what made you  
Arise and dress yourself ?

*Otto.* I was awake ;  
And is not that enough ?  
Besides, 'tis well  
And fortunate I rose ; for otherwise,  
I had been longer of discovering  
What is to me such joy.

*Hugo.* Indeed ? what is it ?

*Otto.* The knight went past—I call'd to him—he came,  
And told me that thou art no Oerindur,  
But mine own uncle—my dear father's brother,—  
And that thou hast agreed to go with him  
To mine own native country—with my mother—  
And *that* soon—soon !—Now, is this true indeed ?

*Hugo.* Spain is thy father-land. To such a clime  
I too shall go. It will receive us all.

*Otto. (Rejoiced.)* Oh, how delightful !—mother ! hasten  
then !

Make every preparation.

*Hugo.* That is little !—  
And thy dear mother will afford it me.

*(Elvira turns away with painful emotion.)*

*Otto.* I spoke already with thy servant Kolbert,  
Who is awake ; and I shall have new dresses,  
And hasten to put off this cumbrous garb,  
So wearisome.

*Hugo.* And so indeed shall I.

*Otto.* And do thou likewise, mother ; though already  
Thy burden is far lighter than Lord Hugo's.

*Elv.* Aye, indeed ?

*Otto.* I think so.

*Hugo.* Now, my child,  
Since thou art here, thou can'st a message take  
To Lady Bertha. Kolbert will go with you.  
Go to the secretaire in my apartment—  
This key will open it ; and thou wilt find  
A parchment, with a silver case enclosing  
A weighty seal. Lest thou should'st err, unfold  
The paper, and take heed to its beginning.  
If 'tis the right one, it will bear these words :—

“ The race of Oerindur, that still has been  
The firm support and pillar of our throne,  
Must, even despite of nature, be upheld.”

*(Much moved.)* That give to Bertha—take the key—and  
then

*(He kisses him.)* Kiss her for me ; and say to her that she

N.

Shall not forget that I held Kolbert dear,  
And Holm, and all the rest. And after this  
Retire to sleep.

*Otto. (Going towards the door.) That shall be quickly  
done.*

*Elv. But, Otto !—*

*(She hastens to him, and kisses him eagerly, and  
with tears.)*

*Oh, my child !—*

*Otto. Thou weep'st !*

*Elv. Kiss Bertha too,*

*For me—and Don Valeros—as a father  
Still hold him dear !—*

*Otto. He is my grandfather,  
And I do love him truly. Now, good night !*

*Elv. Good night, dear child ! (Exit Otto.)*

#### SCENE X.

HUGO, ELVIRA.

*(Deep stillness for twenty or twenty-five seconds. During  
this, Hugo sits on a chair, on the right hand side of the  
stage, and appears to pray with tranquillity. Elvira goes,  
after the departure of Otto, to the other side, where her  
harp leans, kneels, and prays earnestly, but without moving  
her lips. The clock strikes twelve. A slight shuddering*

*agitates Elvira. She rises slowly from prayer, and calmness prevails in her countenance. Hugo, when the clock has ceased striking, slowly rises from his chair, and goes towards Elvira.)*

*Hugo.* The hour has call'd !—Sweet wife,  
Now give me what thou hast, and I require !—

*Elv.* Oh ! I can understand thee—

*(She draws forth the dagger.)*

It is *this* !

*Hugo.* Its place was on thy heart—

*Elv.* And thou shalt have it !

*(Embracing him with ardour.)*

Farewell—until we meet again !—

*Hugo.* Aye—there,

Where sister, friend, and wife at last unites

The same chaste bond. Then give it me—and fly !—

*Elv.* Softly !—

*(She retires from him, and takes hold with her left hand of the harp, which rests on a chair ; then adds resolutely, and with dignity,)*

To me, even as to thee, for ever

Is peace destroy'd ; and equally has guilt

Oppress'd my soul. Now, therefore, since the time

Has come for parting, I shall boldly go

Before thee through the dark and unknown path

That leads to life eternal.

*(She stabs herself ; her knees falter, the harp falls sliding from the chair to the ground, and she sinks down upon it, holding the dagger in her right hand.)*

*Hugo. (Violently agitated.)* Heavens !—Elvira !—  
 Now first even of mine own wild words I feel  
 The full import. One murder brings another.—  
 Through one unhappy deed I have destroy'd  
 All that were dear to me ! 'Tis time indeed  
 That I should die. Come give it me !

*(He takes with some difficulty the dagger, which she seems to grasp convulsively in her hand ; and says as he returns suddenly to his chair,)*

In haste,

Out of life's cavern dark I follow thee !—

*Elv. (With exertion.)* Then God have mercy on thy soul !

*(Hugo during these words holds up his clasped hands, in which also he has the dagger, towards heaven ; then stabs himself. His knees totter—his right hand seizes the chair, his left retains the dagger. In this position he remains for a few seconds.)*

# SCENE XI.

HUGO, ELVIRA, BERTHA, VALEROS, OTTO. *(They enter suddenly.)*

*Ber. (Runs up to Hugo, seizing him by the left arm.)*

My Lord !

What wouldst thou do ?

*Hugo. (Letting fall the bloody dagger at her feet.)*

Nay—it is done !

Yet badly—not so well as I struck him !—

*(He sinks down in the chair, yet half supported.)*

*Ber. (Who starts back at the fall of the dagger, with great emotion,)*

Oh !—

*Val. Otto ! thou hast kill'd thy father !*

*Ber. (To Hugo, recollecting herself, suddenly.) Still,—*  
Is there no hope ?

*Hugo. No—nothing—but from woe*  
Release by suffering.—

*Otto. (At a short distance.) Oh, my poor—poor uncle !—*

*Ber. (With faltering voice, leaning on Hugo.)*  
My friend—my brother !—

*Otto. (Seeing Elvira.) Oh, Almighty powers !*  
See—see my mother bleeding on the ground !—

*(He kneels beside her.)*

*Ber. Oh God !—*

*Val. (Vehemently.) Who has committed this dire crime ?*  
Here lies a bloody dagger.

*Ber. 'Tis Elvira's.*

*Val. (To Hugo.) Man ! if thou too hast done this*  
deed !—

*Elv. (With difficulty.) No !—I—*  
'Twas I myself !—

*Val. (Perplexed.) Indeed ?—*

*Elv. (Half raised, and looking up.) My words are true—*  
Certain as now it is—that, like the tone  
Of this poor harp,—that serves me for a pillow,—  
My soul—floats heavenward !—

*(She sinks dying on the harp ; her hand falls dead*  
*on the strings, and there is heard a soft expi-*  
*ring tone.)*

Otto. Mother ! Thus I saw  
Thy features in my dream !— (He leans over her.)

Val. (To Hugo.) My son ! forgive  
The thought—

Hugo. On earth suspicion rules—and darkness.  
Yonder is light !—

Val. Oh that I had not come  
To cause thy death !—

Hugo. (Weakly.) To Spain—my body—bear !—  
For—he forgave us— (In delirium.)

From the avenging spirit  
He takes the sword—and makes a sign—  
(Raising his voice.) The soul  
Is free—the body falls !— (He falls down and dies.)

Ber. (In the middle of the stage, after a short pause, with  
animation,) Amen !

So let it fall !—I loved the soul !—Of this  
Death cannot my fond heart bereave. And now,  
Methinks, I shall behold it in the star  
Of evening gleaming on me !—

Val. If the spirit  
When thus the body falls, is free,—then come,  
Oh friendly steel ! and give me freedom too !

(He suddenly takes up the dagger, and Bertha  
wrests it from him.)

Ber. Knight ! be a man !—Kneels not your grandson  
here ?

Val. And can'st thou live, if thou indeed hast loved  
him ?—

Ber. I am a CHRISTIAN ;—only those whom GUILT

Or madness rules, are suicides. Be thine  
To live, even for this orphan boy.

*Otto.* Oh Heaven !

And *wherefore* are these horrible events ?

*Ber.* Enquirest thou why stars arise and set ?—

That *only* which *exists* is clear below—

*More* only can the judgment-day reveal.

*(The curtain falls.)*



## SONNET VALEDICTORY.

---

MY task is done, that sweetly wore away  
Some evening hours, to solitude resign'd,  
While moan'd around me the cold wintry wind,  
And visions wild held unresisted sway!—  
For this I owe one valedictory lay!—  
Nor, MÜLLNER ! will it thee displease to find,  
That the pure light of thy creative mind  
Can, FROM AFAR, its influence display.—  
And of the Bard this is the lofty meed,—  
(" No prophet in his native land," and worn  
Perchance by woes, that on his vitals feed,—  
By sickness, poverty, neglect, and scorn,)  
FROM LAWS OF TIME AND SPACE HIS NUMBERS FREED,  
ON THEIR OWN WINGS, FROM POLE TO POLE ARE  
BORNE !

FINIS.

---

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